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REVOLUTION AND REACTION IN MODERN FRANCE

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THE TRAGEDY OF THE PURITAN REVOLUTION

188

REVOLUTION AND REACTION IN MODERN FRANCE.

BY G. LOWES DICKINSON, M.A., FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

31818

ὦ γῆς ὄχημα κἀπὶ γῆς ἔχων ἕδραν,
ὅστις ποτ' εἶ σύ, δυστύπαστος εἰδέναι
Ζεύς, εἴτ' ἀνάγκη φύσεος εἴτε νοῦς βρότων,
προσηυξάμην σε· πάντα γὰρ δι' ἀψόφου
βαίνων κελεύθου κατὰ δίκην τὰ θνήτ' ἄγεις

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PREFACE

THIS book does not profess to be a history of Modern France; it is rather an attempt to describe the development of political thought and political parties there. I have not, therefore, made a point of narrating events in their chronological order—a task which has been accomplished by other writers, for example by Mr. Oscar Browning in his "Modern France"—but have endeavoured primarily to seize and reproduce the general character of each successive period. For this purpose I have found ample material in the works referred to at the head of each chapter; and though I cannot doubt that I have made statements which it may be necessary to modify, yet I am not without hope that my account may be found, on the whole, to be sufficiently trustworthy: I will not say that it is impartial, for every

writer has his point of view; mine, I suppose, will be readily detected by those who do not agree with it; and in any case it is hardly for me to apologise for, or explain it. I have written my book with a view to what I conceived to be the wants of the general public; but it will not, I hope, on that account, be altogether unacceptable to students.

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CHAPTER I

THE REVOLUTION OF 1789

Of the histories of the Revolution that I have consulted I have found that of M. Taine by far the most instructive ; that of Mr. H. Morse Stephen is the most recent and the most complete in its information. The condition of France before the Revolution has been minutely analysed and described by Tocqueville ("L'ancien régime et la révolution"), by M. Taine ("L'ancien régime"), and by M. de Broc ("La France sous l'ancien régime." Paris, 1887). Its condition under the Directory has been examined by M. Félix Rocquain ("L'état de la France au 18me Brumaire").

CHAPTER I

THE REVOLUTION OF 1789

§ 1. Preliminary.

The history of modern France is the history of the Revolution of 1789: that Revolution is not yet completed; 1793, 1799, 1814, 1830, 1848, 1851, 1870, are so many dates of its advance and recoil: becoming transformed itself in the process of transforming France, it has been gradually defining in practice its own theoretic ideal, limiting itself by the act of realisation, and substituting for its airy vision of Utopia the solid and measurable structure of the Third Republic: that that Republic is not the term of the process will probably be admitted by any one who has studied the history of parties and ideas in France; but it is the present halting-place, and the present verdict of the facts on the scope and achievement of the movement of which it is the latest expression. With the Revolution, then, must begin, as with the Third Republic it must end, a book whose endeavour is to render intelligible the history of modern France: but to add yet another to the many summaries of that

unsummable period would be beside the plan of the present work; it will be sufficient for its purpose to develop two points—first, what were the conditions from which the Revolution proceeded, and by which its character was fixed,—secondly, what were its actual achievements up to the date when it passed under the tutelage of Napoleon I.

§ 2. The Origin of the Revolution.

The movement which took the form of revolution in France was the movement, common to all Europe, of the transformation of feudal institutions into those of the modern State: at the end of the eighteenth century it had proceeded far in England; it had been started in Austria; but in France no step had been made: yet in no other country was there greater need of change, and, what is more important, in no other country was the need so keenly felt: a public opinion had been created which was at once acutely critical of the actual and absurdly credulous of the ideal; which perceived with inexorable lucidity not only that grievances existed, both material and sentimental, but that these grievances depended directly on the political and social organisation; and which yet, having access to no machinery by which it could make itself felt as reform, was compelled, by defect of experience and power, to distort its vision and waste its force over imaginary constructions in the air: it is the conjunction of these two conditions—grievances dependent

on political organisation, and opinion indignant but powerless for action—that explains at once the fact and the character of the Revolution of 1789.

§ 3. The Grievance of Privilege.

That in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was extreme poverty in France is a notorious fact on which we need not dwell at length; a single quotation may suffice to recall the facts:—"Our country people," writes a witness in 1740, "live in frightful destitution, without beds or furniture; most of them, during half the year, are without even the barley bread and hay which is their only food, and which they are obliged to snatch from their children's mouths in order to pay the taxes:" this testimony might be qualified by others; it might also be emphasised: but there is poverty in all societies, and the point to notice about that of pre-revolutionary France, is not its extent, but its causal connection with the existence of politically privileged classes: the nobility, the clergy, and officials of the third estate were practically exempt from the burden of taxation, which therefore fell, almost entirely, upon those who were least able to support it, and who had to pay, in addition, to their feudal lords, innumerable dues in money or in kind: it is calculated that in this way an ordinary farmer was mulcted of 82 per cent. of his income; so that, apart from the usual economic causes, the mere political relation of classes was

sufficient to produce and perpetuate poverty. Privilege was thus a practical grievance; it was also a sentimental one. The nobility had no longer public functions corresponding to their public position; they took no part in the central or local government of the country; their superiority was that of birth, of manners, of access to the court, while the actual administration was in the hands of members of the third estate, who remained, even though they might be ennobled for their services, a distinct and inferior caste: the nobles held the highest position in the State; plebeians performed the highest functions; and this contradiction was a permanent cause of friction and discontent. And if these were the feelings of the higher bourgeoisie, they were only the more intense among the humbler members of the order, who, while they had neither wealth nor office to redeem their inferiority of birth, possessed, or imagined themselves to possess, qualities as distinguished as their position was obscure: the interpreter of all this class is the Figaro of Beaumarchais, who in his celebrated monologue apostrophises his master thus:—"Nobility, fortune, rank, office, how proud we are of them! What have you done to procure such blessings? You have taken the trouble to be born, no more! Otherwise, an ordinary man! Whereas I, an insignificant unit in the crowd, have had to employ more science and calculation merely to gain my living, than has been devoted in the last hundred years to the government of all the Spains."

Now the point to notice about this inequality, which was becoming more and more an intolerable grievance, is that, inasmuch as it was due to the existence of privilege transmitted by inheritance, it was a political not an economic fact; that is to say it resulted not from the free competition of individuals of different capacities and opportunities, but from the restrictions introduced into their mutual relations by the State. The remedy, therefore, lay in a political transformation which should distribute proportionally among all classes the burden of taxation, abolish the feudal dues, and establish the possibility of a free passage from the lowest to the highest rank in the State: such a transformation would appear to be the more immediately feasible that it had primarily to level barriers rather than to raise dykes; and it is this fact, not the mere existence of distress and discontent, that gives a peculiar character to the situation in 1789: not only did real grievances exist, but they were due to political causes, and could be remedied by political transformation: this is the fact that day by day was making itself clearly felt; and all the time that the force of events was urging the necessity of reform, the force of thought was sapping the structure to which reform was to be applied.

§ 4. The Movement of Opinion.

The government of France was an absolute monarchy, and its theoretic basis was supernatural,

not utilitarian; a special consecration was assumed in the person of the Sovereign and his descendants, and this consecration could only be derived from God himself: thus a belief in God, not merely as an abstract supreme being, but as an active intervening providence, was the speculative presupposition of the actually constituted authority, and the Catholic Church was its natural and indispensable ally: but the philosophy of the eighteenth century was the enemy of all supernaturalism, and especially, in France, of its concrete embodiment in the Church: Voltaire's "*écrasez l'infâme*" is an epitome of the whole movement: the Church was odious to the philosopher not only in theory but in practice; not only did it profess what was incredible, but it performed what was abominable; it persecuted Protestants and free-thinkers; it caused the execution, in particular, of Calas and La Barre; it produced and encouraged convulsionists "rolling on the ground half-naked, foaming at the mouth like Sibyls;" it suppressed the Encyclopædia; it condemned and burnt "Émile"; it was the enemy, not only of light, but of justice, benevolence and toleration:—"Next to our own religion" says Voltaire, "next to our own holy religion, which is, of course, the only good one, which would be the least bad? Would it not be that which is the most simple? Would it not be that which includes in its teaching the maximum of morality and the minimum of dogma? that which would tend to make men just without making them ridiculous? that

which would not insist upon the acceptance of impossible and contradictory beliefs, at once discreditable to the Deity and injurious to mankind? that which would not dare to threaten with damnation any one who should be guilty of common sense? which would not maintain executioners in the service of its creed, nor deluge the earth with innocent blood in support of incomprehensible sophistries? which would not make use of an ambiguous phrase, a play upon words, and two or three imaginary charters, to convert into a sovereign and a god a priest who has often been guilty of incest and murder? which would not submit to that priest the authority of kings? which would exhort only to the worship of God, to justice, toleration and human kindness?" To attack in this way the Church and Christianity, was to expose to the criticism of reason the fabric of secular society: the existing institutions could not, henceforth, be defended on the ground of their supernatural origin; and it was plain that they could not be defended on the ground of practical expediency: the logical absurdity of a feudal system which had out-grown the circumstances for which it was created was no less apparent to the intellect of the privileged classes themselves than its actual working was oppressive to the interests and sentiments of the third estate: the incompetency of the Government; the exclusion of the nobility from public functions; the tyranny and superstition of the Church; the insurmountable impediments to the fruitful application of intellect and talent in the State; the

disastrous operation of the financial system, with its dependence upon the existence of privileged orders; all this became more and more obvious and intolerable as the reason grew hardier to examine and judge; and thus everything was prepared for the destruction of the old, even had there been no enthusiasm for the creation of the new.

But the thought of the eighteenth century was not only critical and solvent; it was also, itself, a new creed and, at last, a new fanaticism: the belief which it refused to the traditions of Church and State it transferred to its own abstractions and ideals: because, in the France of the eighteenth century, there were evils which could be traced to institutions as their cause, the conclusion was drawn that institutions are the cause of all evil: in accordance with this conception a "natural man" was imagined, peaceful, happy, and nude; and though all that was assumed at first was the probability of his existence in the past, it was an easy transition to assume the possibility of his existence in the future: if customs and laws had introduced corruption, their abolition, it might be supposed, would restore to innocence:—"If man is good by nature," says Rousseau, "as I am confident that I have proved him to be, it follows that he will continue so, as long as he is not perverted by alien influences; if then, men are wicked, as I am so earnestly instructed that they are, it follows that this wickedness must come to them from without; close therefore, the door to vice, and the human heart will

be always good." It is thus that the theory of the "natural man" was connected with that of human perfectibility: if the intellect and passions were allowed to expand, unhampered by artificial barriers, they would, it was supposed, of themselves evolve into happiness and virtue; the condition of such expansion was the destruction of the old order, which was thus, in all its notorious deformity, confronted with the beauty of the ideal.

The enthusiasm thus aroused was deepened, at once, and darkened, by the doctrines of the *Social Contract*, which, in professing to explain the origin of society, produced, in effect, both an indictment against the existing government of France, and a passionate appeal for a new and juster organisation: at a certain moment, according to this book, certain men, being at that time all of them equal and free, had met together and deliberately agreed, for their common convenience and profit, to submit each his individual will to the general will of the Whole: this deliberate compact was the only basis and justification of all political authority; every actual ruler, or ruling body, was only a delegate of the people, which was unable, even if it should so desire, to divest itself of the sovereignty: it follows that in any State, and at any given moment, the whole body of citizens has the right to resume its original powers; that is to say, to dissolve the existing government, and to set up any other in its place. Such a theory as this not only stultified and sapped the absolute monarchy in France,

but it also proclaimed an alternative ideal as a necessary and absolute truth: existing institutions, which were already conceived as the origin of all evil, were now regarded, over and above, as the formal negation of a prior and inalienable right: thus to the passion for happiness and virtue was added the passion for abstract justice; reason was invoked in support of sentiment, and the enthusiast converted into the fanatic of an idea.

§ 5. The Absolutism of the Government.

The prevalence, however, even of such a public opinion as this, is not enough, of itself, to account for a revolution: it must be considered in connection with the character of the government, which may be illustrated by the following address delivered in 1787 to the Parliament of Paris:—"To the King alone belongs the sovereign authority in his kingdom, and he is accountable only to God for his exercise of the supreme power; the legislative power resides in the person of the sovereign; it is dependent on none and shared with none: the representatives of the three orders of the State can be to him nothing but a larger council, whose members are selected from a family of which he is the head, and of whose representations and grievances he must be the supreme arbiter." From this statement it will be perceived that a representative assembly in France was simply a council to give advice which might or might not be

accepted; and even such an assembly had not been held for more than a century and a half: national affairs were transacted by the King and his council; local affairs by officials appointed by the central authority: with the exception of these officials, and of the members of the council, there was, broadly speaking, no one in France who had any experience of public affairs: neither were there any facilities for hearing or judging of current political events; the press was subject to strict censorship; the communication between Paris and the provinces was tardy and defective; there was no such thing as public meeting and discussion of national interests: there were thus no means whereby the revolutionary opinion we have analysed could be brought to bear with effect upon actual facts; it could neither modify circumstances, nor be modified by them; it remained like a thunderbolt, suspended in the air, and fell only to consume the fabric it had been forbidden to illumine.

§ 6. The Principles of the Revolution and their Immediate Interpretation in Fact.

From the conditions which have just been examined it resulted that the transition from the feudal to the modern state, which was progressive in other countries, in France was revolutionary: in little more than three years the whole of the ancient organisation of society was destroyed—feudal dues, titles of

nobility, tithes, clerical corporations, trade guilds, the administrative system, the fiscal system, the division of the country into provinces, lastly the monarchy itself: with equal expedition were formulated the principles of the new order: the sovereignty of the people, the supremacy of the law, the responsibility of public servants, liberty of thought, of person, and of the press, security of property, proportional taxation, the right of every citizen to assist in the formation of the law, and to control the assessment of the taxes and the employment of public funds, all these, the axioms of the modern democratic state, were formally and precisely enunciated in the Declaration of Rights. The ideal of modern France was thus defined; and her history for the next hundred years was an attempt to realise in practice, what a week or two had sufficed to elaborate in theory. After the enunciation of principles came their conversion into fact; and here was the real problem of the Revolution. The first attempt to solve it was that of the Constituent Assembly, whose constructive work may be summed up as follows:—

In place of the absolute monarchy it established a constitutional government, vesting the executive power in the King, and the legislative in a single representative assembly, and exacting, both for deputies and electors, a property qualification.

In place of the centralised administration it established a system of local government, based upon a new division of the country into departments, districts,

and communes; each of these divisions had its representative council and executive, the commune being subject, in theory, to the district, and the district to the department.

In place of the independent Church, possessing its own property and deriving its consecration from Rome, it established a body of elected officials, salaried by the State and instituted by the metropolitan bishops.

But this work of the Constituent Assembly was open to obvious criticism from the point of view of the principles it had itself proclaimed: it had declared the people to be sovereign, yet it retained a King; it had declared that every citizen had a right to take part in the formation of the law, yet it retained a property qualification: plainly, both liberty and equality had been violated by those who had been the first to proclaim them; and the work thus marred must be amended by more consistent revolutionists: accordingly, the constitution of 1791 was abolished by the insurrection of August 10, and a new one adopted which admitted the principle of manhood suffrage, and a direct veto of the people on laws proposed by the Assembly: such a constitution, if it had ever taken effect, would have been at least a logical interpretation of the principle of the sovereignty of the people; but as a matter of fact it remained, and was intended to remain, a dead letter; and the interpretation actually adopted in its place was the despotism of the Committee of Public Safety: how this came about is described in the histories of

the Revolution; here it will be sufficient to indicate briefly the logical process it implies.

§ 7. The Transition from 1789 to 1793.

The chiefs of the Revolution had proceeded upon what they conceived to be absolute principles; it followed that they were infallible, and that if their views appeared to conflict with experience, it must be experience that was wrong: this attitude is noted by contemporary observers: "They imagined," says one, "that they were assembled to retrieve every fault of the past, to correct every error of the human mind, and to secure the happiness of future generations: doubt had no place in their minds and infallibility presided perpetually over all their contradictory decrees." Such an attitude already implies that no terms will be made with opposition; but it was not expected, at first, that any opposition would be maintained: the hypothesis still prevailed that men are naturally reasonable and good, and that they would resume these original qualities on the disappearance of the institutions that had obscured them: they would therefore accept and fulfil those decrees, dictated by "absolute reason," which were *ex hypothesi* no more than the expression of the general will. At the first moment it appeared as though these expectations would be fulfilled: the federation feasts of 1790 suggested irresistibly the dawn of a millennium: nobles and plebeians, Catholics and Protestants, old

men and children, were meeting, embracing, weeping, haranguing, dancing and drinking together, and swearing at the altar eternal love, and devotion to the nation and the laws:—"At St. Andréol the honour of taking the oath at the head of all the people was conferred on two patriarchs, one aged 93, the other 94, one a noble and the colonel of the National Guard, the other an ordinary labourer; they embraced at the altar, thanking Heaven that they had lived to see that day: the people were full of emotion, believing they beheld in those venerable men the everlasting reconciliation of classes: they rushed into one another's arms and joining hands in a country dance, comprising everybody without exception, spread through the town, into the fields, across the mountains of Ardèche and towards the meadows of the Rhine; wine flowed in the streets, tables were spread, provisions placed in common; and all the people ate together in the evening, solemnising this love-feast and praising God."

"At Saint Jean de Gard, near Alais, the Catholic curate and the Protestant minister embraced at the altar. . . . . All hearts overflowed with love; prose was not sufficient; a burst of poetry could alone express so profound an emotion: the curate composed and chanted a hymn to liberty; the mayor replied in stanzas, and his wife, a respectable mother of a family at the moment when she presented her children at the altar, poured forth the feelings of her heart in a few pathetic verses."

Such scenes as these appeared for a moment to support the hypothesis of the "natural man," and of the single "general will" in which all individuals were supposed to acquiesce: but the course of events brought with it disenchantment; it became clear that the population was still divided, as it had been before the Revolution, into a number of groups representing the most diverse and irreconcileable interests; and that what was assumed to be the "general will" was, in fact, not even that of the majority, but that of the faction which at any moment might show itself the strongest and the least scrupulous: thus, to begin with, there was a party of reaction, which assembled on the frontier and threatened war; there was the constitutional opposition of the King to certain decrees of the Assembly, which was met by his deposition and the proclamation of the Republic; there was the opposition of the various Republican parties to one another, the annihilation of the Girondins by the Jacobins, and of the Hébertists and Dantonists by the followers of Robespierre; there was the division between the clergy who refused and the clergy who accepted the oath to the constitution; between the constitutional clergy and the secularists; between the communes and the districts and departments to which they were supposed to be subject; between the municipal officers and the people they were supposed to represent; lastly, there was the fundamental cleavage between the rich and the poor, which was rather emphasised than diminished by the events of the

Revolution. Thus, instead of a homogeneous body of equal and fraternal patriots, there appeared a number of isolated groups whose differences were so emphatic and so fundamental that it was impossible even to arrive at the ordinary compromise by which the minority consents to submit to the majority. The idealists of the Revolution were therefore compelled to adopt a new position: they had assumed not only that their principles were true, but that, as such, they would be readily accepted by the rest of the human race; being disappointed in this expectation, they concluded, not that the principles were false, or their application defective, but that their opponents were at once irrational and wicked; the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people was still maintained, in theory; but the "people" were now defined as those who belonged to the dominant faction; the rest were traitors, or at best, obstructionists, whom it was a duty as well as a necessity to destroy: "even the indifferent are to be punished," said St. Just, "all who are *passive* in the Republic." The original phrases were still preserved; Robespierre could still declare with unction that "man is born for liberty" and "his rights are written in his heart;" but by "man" is understood the Jacobin of the present, or the ideal soldier-farmer of the future; the rest are monsters whose swift extermination is a necessary prelude to the new order:—"We will make a graveyard of France," said Carrier, "rather than fail to regenerate her according to our ideas"; and this programme

was literally fulfilled by the party to which he belonged.

It was thus that the "liberty, equality, fraternity" of 1789 issued, with an appearance of logical necessity, in the despotism of the Reign of Terror; but this transformation completely reversed the formulæ in whose interest it was supposed to be accomplished; there was scarcely one of the creations of the Constituent Assembly that survived under the government of the Convention; nor one of the principles of the Declaration of Rights that was not reversed in practice. To illustrate this it will be sufficient to compare the fact with the theory in certain definite points.

§ 8. The Theory and the Fact.

1. "All citizens have the right to take part in the formation of the law, either personally or through their representatives. All citizens, being equal in its sight, are equally admissible to all dignities, places and public employments, according to their capacity, and without other distinction than that of their virtues and talents." (Declaration of Rights, Art. 6.)

The constitution of 1791, by retaining a property qualification, both for voters and for members of the legislative and administrative councils, directly contradicted the principle of which it was supposed to be the expression: this defect was remedied by the constitution of 1793; but that constitution, as has been already noticed, was never intended to take

effect: it was promulgated as a blind for the departments, "a torpedo to numb them to sleep," while the real power was assumed by the Committee of Public Safety: this Council of twelve, for almost a year, enjoyed an authority as absolute as that of the Czar; through the Convention they controlled legislation, and they were themselves the executive, employing the Ministers as "clerks;" the functions of the departmental councils they limited to the assessment of taxes and the repair of roads; those of the municipalities they "suspended till further notice:" their commissioners were as absolute in the departments as they themselves at the centre; they disposed at their pleasure of life and property; they prevented or punished by wholesale massacres any attempt at rebellion: there was no such thing as "security, liberty, property, and resistance to oppression;" that is to say, in the name of the Rights of Man, the Rights of Man were abolished.

2. "No one can be accused, arrested, or detained except in the cases determined by the law, and according to the forms it has prescribed." (D. R., Art. 7.)

On March 10, 1793, the Convention passed the following decree: "There shall be established an extraordinary criminal tribunal to take cognisance of every counter-revolutionary enterprise, of all offences against the liberty, equality, unity, and indivisibility of the Republic, and the interior and exterior security of the State; and of all plots tending to re-establish the Monarchy."

In September this tribunal was divided into four sections to enable it to work more rapidly; the judges were permitted to stop the trial at any point if the jury professed that they were already convinced; ultimately, the prisoners were deprived of counsel, and condemned in batches. Similar courts were established in the provinces. On September 17 was passed the law of "suspects:" a "suspect" is there defined as "any one who has shown himself a partisan of tyranny or federation; any one who cannot prove that he has performed his civic duties; those of the *ci-devant* nobles who have not constantly given evidence of their attachment to the Revolution; public officials who have been suspended or dismissed either by the Convention or by its commissions, and have not been reinstated:" any "suspect" might be sent before the revolutionary tribunal. There was thus established an extraordinary court, emancipated from the usual forms of law, taking cognisance of indefinite political offences, and having the power of life and death: the numbers condemned by this court, and guillotined, in Paris alone, are as follows:—between April 15 and October 1, 1793, 66, or an average of 3 a week; between October 1, 1793, and June 9, 1794, 1165, or an average of over 32 a week; between June 10 and July 27, 1794, 1376, or an average of over 196 a week.

3. "Property being an inviolable and sacred right, no one can be deprived of it, except when public necessity, legally established, evidently requires it,

and then only on condition of the previous payment of a fair compensation." (D. R., Art. 17.)

The Constituent Assembly proceeded at once to violate this principle by the confiscation, without indemnity, of the property of the Church; the Legislative Assembly, in its turn, appropriated the property of the *émigrés*: these measures were defended as dealing, the first, with the property of corporations, the second, with that of traitors; but the Convention went further; it perceived that the poor were its natural allies, and the rich its natural enemies, and proceeded, accordingly, to feed the former at the expense of the latter; on March 5, 1793, it passed a decree regulating the price of bread by the rate of wages, and directing that the loss which would fall on the State should be met by a special tax on the rich; on May 2 it determined a maximum price for corn, under the influence of a petition whose terms it is interesting to reproduce:— "Decree a fixed price for corn; and then tear up all unfair leases: let every one who possesses more than 2000 livres a year contribute the half of the surplus to the expenses of the war and the relief of the poor: if you reject these wholesome and necessary measures know that the people is in a state of insurrection." The commune, at the same time, passed a decree requisitioning on loan the surplus of all incomes above 30,000 livres: on September 17, the law of the "maximum" was extended to all the necessaries of life, and it was made a capital offence to withhold them from the market: in February, 1794, the

property of "suspects" was appropriated; and it was so easy to include in this category anybody who happened to be rich, that practically all property henceforth was at the disposal of the Convention: finally it was declared by the "decrees of ventose" that the property of "enemies of the Revolution" was sequestrated; that a list should be made of "needy patriots"; and that a report should be drawn up as to the means of "indemnifying the latter with the goods of the former." Such is the history, under the Revolution, of the "sacred and inviolable right" of property.

4. "No one may be interfered with on account of his opinions, even on the subject of religion, so long as their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by the law." (D. R., Art. 10.)

The "Civil Constitution of the Clergy" set up by the Constituent Assembly, was an immediate challenge to this principle: a schism was created in the Church; some priests refused and others accepted the oath to the new constitution; and though an effort was made to deal gently with the non-jurors, they were eventually ordered to leave the country, sentenced, if they refused, to transportation, and in case of persistent contumacy, to death. The imposition of the oath was an interference with religious opinion, for the Pope had condemned the constitution; it might, however, be justified on the ground that the opinions attacked were prejudicial to public order: but as the Revolution proceeded a persecution was instituted, not

only against non-jurors but against all Christian priests: they were made liable to transportation at the pleasure of the administrative authorities; they were forbidden to wear the ecclesiastical costume, or to celebrate worship in public; they were urged to give up their orders, and marry, and were punished with imprisonment if they refused; the churches were closed or converted into public assembly halls; steeples were demolished, images smashed, relics desecrated, and an opera dancer enthroned in Notre Dame in the character of the goddess of Reason: a new fanaticism and a new persecution succeeded to the old; and this tyranny of the grotesque was exercised in the name of toleration and reason.

§ 9. The Immediate Results of the Revolution.

It is thus abundantly proved that the Revolution issued in self-contradiction; it was so far from establishing its own principles that it directly reversed them in practice. And, even so, it had not succeeded in creating a permanent government; the temporary unity and force which the Reign of Terror had secured was ended by the Revolution of Thermidor; a series of insurrections destroyed the prestige of the Convention and of the Directory; and it was not till the *coup d'état* of Brumaire that political order was restored. Meantime, and through the whole revolutionary period, social and economic anarchy had prevailed: confusion, ignorance, and corruption were the rule

in administration and finance; hospitals had degenerated into nurseries of disease; public buildings were everywhere in decay; the roads were becoming impassable, and were infested by brigands; in certain districts a third of the population lived by begging and stealing; the law of the maximum, the requisitions, the war, the insecurity, the difficulties of communication, had ruined commerce; elementary education was becoming extinct, and where it existed was little better than a farce; everything, in every department, had been destroyed, and, in spite of innumerable positive decrees, nothing as yet had been re-created! every writing and record had been obliterated from the chart of France; and the only new inscription was a note of interrogation. The old order was abolished; the principles of a new one had been affirmed; but the first attempt to establish them in practice had issued in a catastrophe. Would a second attempt be made? if so, with what interpretation? with what precautions? with what success? These are the questions that it fell to the lot of Napoleon to answer.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST EMPIRE

H. TAINE. "Le Régime Moderne."
E. HAMEL. "Histoire de France."
A. EDMOND-BLANC. "Napoléon I. et ses Institutions."
J. BARNI. "Napoléon I."
ROEDERER. "Œuvres."
PELET DE LA LOZÈRE. "Opinions de Napoléon '
MME. DE RÉMUSAT. "Mémoires."

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST EMPIRE

§ 1. Napoleon and the Philosophy of the Revolution.

"If the present project of a Republic should fail, all securities to a moderated freedom fail along with it; all the indirect restraints which mitigate despotism are removed; insomuch that if Monarchy should ever again obtain an entire ascendency in France, under this or under any other dynasty, it will probably be, if not voluntarily tempered, at setting out, by the wise and virtuous counsels of the prince, the most completely arbitrary power that has ever appeared on earth." This prophecy of Burke's was fulfilled by Napoleon I. The way had been already prepared by the Committee of Public Safety; on anarchy they had superimposed a despotism; they had eliminated the possible elements of resistance; and when they fell the only power that remained standing was the army. Napoleon succeeded to the heritage of Cæsar and of Cromwell; his opportunity is clear and his success intelligible; and it will be convenient here, omitting the steps by

which he rose to power, to pass at once to the consideration of his work and of the spirit in which it was conceived.

Napoleon had passed through the Revolution without sympathy with its ideal; the doctrine of equality he welcomed because it opened to him a career; that of liberty he never accepted or understood: he mistrusted popular movements and popular sentiments: the philosophy of the eighteenth century he put aside with contempt; he neither believed in it himself nor believed that the nation believed in it; "your Rousseau was a madman," he said; "it is he who has brought us to this pass!" he judged the Revolution by what it had done, not by what it had meant to do; it had promised the millennium and achieved an inferno; it had started with Rousseau and ended in Fouquier-Tinville; and the conclusion damned the prelude. Idealism having thus been tested and failed, it was time to return to facts; what did the nation really desire? what capacities did it really possess? that was the point to ascertain, and that the basis to choose for the new creation. Let the end, henceforth, be the attainable, and the means the practicable: "we have finished the romance of the Revolution, it is time to begin its history; to note only what is real and possible in the application of its principles, and to ignore all that is merely speculative and hypothetical." The application to politics of *à priori* principles had hurried the Revolution to a catastrophe; the restorer and creator of society must directly

reverse the method:—"It is to ideology that we must attribute all the misfortunes experienced by France; to that obscure metaphysic which inquires minutely into first causes, and endeavours to make them the basis of legislation, instead of adapting laws to our knowledge of the human heart and to the lessons of history. Such errors were bound to lead, as they did, to the reign of the men of blood. In fact, who was it that proclaimed as a duty the principle of insurrection? who was it that flattered the people by attributing to them a sovereignty which they were incapable of exercising? who was it that destroyed the sanctity and authority of the laws by making them dependent not on the sacred principles of justice, on the nature of things, and on law, but merely on the will of an assembly whose members had no acquaintance with the civil, criminal, administrative, political, and military institutions? When one is called to regenerate a State it is the directly opposite principles that one must take as one's guide; it is in history that the advantages and inconveniences of the various systems of laws are to be sought."

§ 2. Napoleon and Equality.

While he was thus opposed to the spirit of the Revolution, Napoleon readily accepted the position it had made: he had no desire to restore the Bourbons and feudalism; on the contrary, the destruction of the *ancien régime* was the presupposition of all his

work: it was *that* which he conceived to be the essential work of the Revolution; and it was his acceptance of *that* which led him to declare "I am the Revolution:" all that was feasible and fruitful in the movement he believed to be summed up in himself; and he expressed it all in the motto "*La carrière ouverte aux talens:*" privilege, once for all, was abolished, and free competition had taken its place: classes were no longer divided by arbitrary barriers; talent, aided by luck, might pass from the lowest to the highest; natural and social inequality remained, but legal inequality was abolished.

Such was the basis and axiom of Napoleon's constructive work; the Revolution had affirmed the principle, it was his to embody it in positive and enduring institutions: in this sense he was, as he boasted himself, the champion of equality; he first realised in fact, what the Revolution had proclaimed in theory, that public burdens should fall upon all, and public offices be open to all: he took no account of birth or political antecedents; talent and loyalty to himself were his sole criterion of merit: of his marshals Masséna was the son of a wine-merchant, Ney of a cooper, Lefebvre of a miller, Murat of a publican, Lannes of an ostler, Augereau of a mason; among his prefects were representatives of the *ancien régime*, of the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies, of both Girondins and Jacobins of the Convention, and of the Directory; on the council of his university sat together Cuvier, the Protestant man of science, and

Bonald, the champion of the Catholic reaction; he recalled the emigrants of every class and every shade of opinion; side by side with the "constitutional" priests he established those who had refused the oath, and opened to members of the old *noblesse* the ranks of his new aristocracy: for every talent he had a use, for every merit a reward—subject, however, to the one condition of absolute submission to his will.

But the equality of the revolutionary ideal had meant something more than this; it had meant, to the more zealous of its devotees, the merging of every distinction in the title of "citizen:" St. Just had conceived a Republic of which every member should be a French Camillus, subsisting on his measured plot of ground, and ready to turn from the plough to the sword at the call of public danger; these were extreme views; but they indicate the vague and comprehensive significance attached to the word equality: all this Napoleon brushed aside, with his characteristic contempt for the ideal; the distinction of rich and poor he regarded as an ultimate fact, which it was the duty of the State to turn to profit, and of religion to turn to edification: property he held to be the basis of society, and it was his constant aim to establish and confirm it: not less appropriate to human nature were the distinctions of title and rank; everybody really desired them whatever his philosophy might pretend to the contrary; "I do not believe," said Napoleon, "that the French love liberty and equality. The French have not been

changed by ten years of revolution; they have but one sentiment—*honour*. That sentiment, then, must be nourished; they must have distinctions." In accordance with this view he founded his "Legion of Honour," whose members received at once a decoration and a pension; he instituted a hierarchy of titles, from Prince to Chevalier; and re-introduced, for their transmission, the principle of heredity: an hereditary title was a contradiction to his own conception of equality, and he recognised the danger; "decorated and rich," he said, "they will endeavour to escape me;" but he consoled himself with the reflection "however fast they run, I shall know how to catch them."

Napoleon's interpretation, then, of the principle of "equality" was both more precise and less comprehensive than that of the Revolution; it was based, like all that he thought and did, on his conception of the average man: self-interest and vanity he held to be the only springs of action; "there is only one thing to be done in this world, and that is to be always acquiring more money and more power; everything else is chimæra:" these passions must be stimulated by prizes, hence the pensions and titles; they must be tested by conflict, hence access for all to the running: the new *régime*, unlike the old, measured the reward by the work done; and this was the fundamental distinction between the old nobility and the new.

§ 3. Napoleon and Liberty.

It was thus that Napoleon realised equality; liberty he did not attempt to realise at all: when he said "I am the Revolution" he meant it; and it followed that the Revolution was not liberty. It was he who had delivered France from anarchy, and it was he who must found the new order: the people did not really want liberty, any more than they wanted equality; even if they wanted it they were not fit for it; even if they were fit for it, they should not have it: "to all your complaints," he said to his wife, "I have the right to reply with an eternal 'I'"; he might have said the same to France: "power is my mistress," "I love it as a musician loves his violin, I love it as an artist:" the artist dare not lend his violin, and least of all to an incompetent player; Napoleon dare not delegate his power, and least of all to revolutionary France: his passion and his conviction, his private and his public ends, pointed in the same direction, and urged the same supremacy: he was the fated man; he had the brain and the will; France was at once his country and his property; and duty conspired with interest to support his absolute control: he had taken over the estate from the Revolution, dilapidated but unencumbered; the old claims were abolished, the old officials expelled; it remained for him to introduce, with the force and precision of a single will, the new

methods and the new tenants appropriate to a new era.

Such, in brief, was the relation of Napoleon to the Revolution; it will be further illustrated and defined by the actual work he accomplished. That work we shall now proceed to pass in review, examining first the political constitution which was the expression of Napoleon's supremacy, and then the administrative and other institutions which he utilised his position to establish.

§ 4. The Political Constitution of the Empire.

By the constitution proposed by Siéyès, after the eighteenth of Brumaire, Napoleon would have been simply an irresponsible and irremovable head of the State; he would have had nothing to do with the practical government of the country: this position of *pourceau à l'engrais* he not unnaturally rejected, and transformed the constitution in such a way that he exercised, as "First Consul," a practically absolute authority; his colleagues in the Consulate, Cambacérès and Lebrun, were, as he put it himself, "nothing but councillors, whom I am obliged to consult, but whose advice I need not listen to:" he was head of the army and navy and appointed all their officers; he nominated the members of the Council of State, the Ministers, the ambassadors, and most of the judges; and he selected, from lists supplied by the electors, the officials of the local administration:—"In all other

acts of the Government the second and third consuls have a consultative voice; they sign the register of these acts to prove that they are present, and if they like they record their own opinion; after which, the decision of the first consul is sufficient." Thus in administration and public policy the first consul was supreme; he was assisted and supported by a Council of State, who had the further function of formulating laws, and interpreting them whenever a doubtful case might arise. The actual legislative power resided in an Assembly of 300, which, however, could only accept or reject, without amendment or discussion, the laws submitted to it by the Council of State. The discussion of these laws was entrusted to a "Tribunate," an Assembly of 100, which deputed three of its members to support its opinion before the Legislative Assembly; three members of the Council represented, before the same body, the views of the Government. In addition to the Tribunate and the Legislative Assembly there was a Senate of 80 members, whose function was to "maintain or annul all acts which are reported to it as unconstitutional by the Tribunate or the government:" the members of the Senate were selected, originally, by the consuls; afterwards they filled up vacancies themselves by co-optation, selecting from three candidates presented for each place, one by the First Consul, one by the Tribunate, and one by the Legislative Assembly; they also selected, from lists presented by the electors, the members of the Tribunate and of the Legislative Assembly; so that

through the Senate, which was originally its own creation, the Government really appointed the members of the two other Assemblies. Practically, therefore, legislation, as well as administration, was in the hands of the First Consul, subject only to the necessity of deferring to the lists presented by the electors: these lists were three; 1st, the *communal list*, being a tenth of the whole voting population, elected by manhood suffrage; 2nd, the *departmental list*, elected by the members of the communal list and being a tenth of their number; 3rd, the *national list*, elected by members of the departmental list, and being a tenth of their number: from the first list were selected the public officers of the communes; from the second the public officers of the departments; from the third the members of the Tribunate and the Legislative Assembly. This was the system established by the Constitution; but in 1802 it was re-organised as follows: — the basis, as before, was manhood-suffrage, represented by the cantonal assemblies:

These assemblies elected

(*a*) from a list of the most highly taxed members of the canton two candidates for each place vacant in the municipal councils. The final selection was made from this list by the First Consul;

(*b*) the electoral college of the "arrondissement";

(*c*) the electoral college of the department (from a list of its most highly taxed inhabitants).

These electoral colleges were permanent.

The electoral college of the "arrondissement" elected

(*a*) up to May 1806, two candidates for each place vacant in the administrative council of the "arrondissement," the final selection being made by the First Consul;

(*b*) two names towards the formation of each of the lists from which the members of the Tribunate and of the Legislative Assembly, respectively, were chosen.

The electoral college of the department elected

(*a*) up to May 1806, two candidates for each place vacant in the council of the department, the final selection being made by the First Consul;

(*b*) two names towards the formation of each of the lists from which the members of the Senate and of the Legislative Assembly, respectively, were chosen.

The final selection of members of the Legislative Assembly and of the Tribunate was made, from the lists so furnished, by the Senate; the Senate also selected its own members from candidates chosen by the First Consul from the list furnished by the electoral colleges of the department.

The presidents of the cantonal assemblies were appointed by the First Consul, who, through them, found it easy to control the more or less illiterate electors: thus popular election never was, and never was meant to be anything but a form; but even the mere form was unacceptable to Napoleon;

in 1806 he suppressed the presentation of candidates for the municipal and departmental councils, and made the selection henceforth directly, and without restriction, himself.

It might be supposed that a Tribunate and Legislative Assembly, so carefully composed according to the method that has been described, would have given little offence to the most exacting Government; they did, however, on certain occasions, venture upon opposition: having no power of amendment, they could only reject what they might otherwise have preferred to modify; and in 1801 they actually did throw out one of the chapters of the new Civil Code: such a step was regarded as factious, and measures were taken at once to "purge" the offending councils: it was the law that one-fifth of their members were renewed every year; hitherto the names of those who were to retire had been selected by lot; but on this occasion the Consul decided that they should be selected by the Senate, that is to say by himself; and in this way he secured the removal of all the prominent members of the opposition: even so he was not satisfied; in 1802 he further diminished the importance of the Tribunate by reducing its numbers to 50, and in 1807 he suppressed it altogether.

It was in 1802 that Napoleon assumed the Consulate for life; at the same time he attributed new power to his instrument, the Senate; it had now the right to dissolve the Tribunate and the Legislative Assembly, to suspend trial by jury, to place the

departments out of the Constitution, and to annul the sentences of the courts: it is plain, after all this, that in 1804, when the First Consul assumed the title of Emperor, he was merely adopting the symbol of a position which he had already established in fact.

The absolute power which he had thus secured Napoleon employed with indefatigable energy in the work of reorganisation: the revolutionary experiment in democracy had issued in anarchy; the system was now to be reversed, and order to be secured at the cost of liberty. The institutions of the Consulate and the Empire are those of modern France; and it is therefore necessary, briefly, to pass them in review.

§ 5. The Administrative System.

The system of local self-government established in 1790 had failed: the communes had proved insubordinate to the central authorities, and the individual citizens to their communal officials; the latter were frequently ignorant, incompetent, and corrupt; and the result of their government had been administrative and financial chaos. "Since 1790," said Napoleon, "the 36,000 communes represent 36,000 orphan girls, neglected or pillaged for ten years by the municipal guardians of the Convention and the Directory. A change of mayors, adjuncts, and communal counsellors has meant, as a rule, nothing but a change in the method of robbery; there has been

robbery of the roads, robbery of the paths, robbery of the trees, robbery of the Church, robbery of the personal effects of the commune." This state of things Napoleon set himself to remedy by a system of centralised administration: the departments were divided into "arrondissements"; over each department was set a prefect, over each "arrondissement" a sub-prefect, over each commune a mayor: these officers were appointed by the Government, and were assisted by administrative councils, elected by the method already described: the councils, however, had no real authority; their functions were to assess the taxes, to vote the special budget of their district, and to give their opinion and advice on local conditions and needs. Such a system was, in fact, a return to that of the ancient monarchy: the prefect took the place of the former "intendant," the department of the former "intendency," and the result was practical efficiency at the cost of local initiative. Centralisation returned the stronger for its temporary expulsion; and no succeeding Government has been able to do more than mitigate its supremacy.

§ 6. The System of Taxation.

The Revolution, as has been already noticed, reformed the system of taxation on the basis of a fair contribution from all classes; but here, as in other departments, its decrees were practically inoperative: both the assessors and the collectors of the taxes had been elected by popular vote; and this arrangement

had resulted in every kind of vexation, abuse and delay: individuals were assessed at more or less according to their political principles; contributions were remitted, forgotten, misappropriated; arrears increased indefinitely; in February 1793, 176 millions (frs.) were due on the year 1791, and 296 millions on the year 1792; in the autumn of the year 1800 there were still 4 millions owing. But Napoleon was now in authority, and in finance, as everywhere else, he made his energy felt: he appointed himself the collectors and receivers; instituted a court for the verification of their accounts; bound them by caution money; and was inexorable to all corruption. Henceforth there are no arrears and no malversation; the reformed system is at work at last, and its results may be measured in money: five or six thousand officials are employed, where under the Monarchy were 200,000; and double the amount comes in: nor is it only the Government that profits; the tax-payer is sensibly relieved: a farmer under the *ancien régime* paid 81 per cent. of his income in taxes and feudal dues; 21 per cent. is now his contribution, levied with the minimum of inconvenience and vexation: for the first time he understands the meaning of the Revolution, and willingly dispenses with his liberty in return for this practical equality.

§ 7. The Judicial System.

The Constituent Assembly had established trial by jury and the election of judges by popular vote: such a system, suddenly introduced in a nation accustomed to despotic government, could hardly have proved satisfactory even in the quietest times; to the Revolution it succumbed at once: witnesses were afraid to give evidence, juries to convict, judges to pass sentence, except in accordance with the passions and desires of the dominant faction: attempts to enforce the common law were regarded as anti-revolutionary; the authorities, it was complained, "are always talking about the law, as if they did not understand that it is the will of the people that makes the law, and that we are the people;" if a judgment delivered was not approved it was quashed by some popular authority; lastly, the ordinary course of justice was replaced by revolutionary tribunals. Napoleon, according to his constant plan, reorganised the system of the Revolution in dependence on the Central Government: he found justices of the peace established in every canton; these he retained, but after 1802 appointed them himself, from candidates named by the electors; he nominated also the other judges, except those of the highest court of appeal, which were appointed by the Senate from candidates presented by himself: in every arrondissement he established a "Court of First Instance," and above these, for civil cases, permanent courts of appeal, and for criminal

cases, travelling assize courts; the ultimate court of appeal was the "Cour de Cassation." Trial by jury was retained in criminal cases; but the jurors were carefully selected from lists drawn up by the prefects, and comprising only the more educated and competent citizens; and at any moment the working of the system could be suspended by a decree of the Senate.

This organisation of justice has been retained to the present day; but Napoleon was obliged to supplement it during his reign by special tribunals; these were composed of three judges, two citizens, and three military officers, and took cognisance of seditious assemblies, plots to assassinate the heads of the Government, robbery under arms, threats and intimidation of the purchasers of national property, attempts to corrupt the army, and all crimes committed by vagabonds and convicts. State prisons were also established to which were consigned, by an order of the Council of State, "all who could neither be brought to trial nor set at liberty without endangering the security of the State." These prisons contained at Napoleon's fall 250 inmates.

In a country just emerging from anarchy, infested by brigands, and torn by faction, some kind of special jurisdiction was necessary; neither the Restoration nor the Monarchy of July was able to dispense with it, and it is therefore puerile to make it a special charge against Napoleon; it is part of his general system of absolutism, and that system was the condition of the restoration of order.

§ 8. The Codes.

In addition to the organisation of justice Napoleon undertook the codification of the law. This work had been commenced by the Revolution, and projects had been prepared both for the Convention and for the Directory: Napoleon succeeded to their labours; he had in his service distinguished lawyers, and he took himself a personal and intelligent part in the work. The Code Civil is still in force, or has formed the basis of legislation, not only in France, but in many other countries; it was promulgated in 1805. The other Codes drawn up under Napoleon's influence are that of Civil Procedure, promulgated in 1806, that of Commerce, in 1807, that of Criminal Instruction, in 1808, and the Penal Code in 1810.

§ 9. The Press.

Thus to administration, justice, and finance Napoleon had given the form which they have since substantially retained; he had reconstructed the body of the State; it remained to discipline and adapt the soul. He was not content with controlling acts; he must also control opinion: every institution and every activity must work in subordination to the State; even the arts must be utilised to support and adorn the Government; the tragedian must exhibit on the stage the heroic prototypes of the Emperor,

the painter choose for his theme the victories of the imperial arms, the orator train his tongue to eulogy. These, however, were sources of influence that could only be indirectly controlled; there were others, more important, and capable of severer discipline. These were the Press, Education, and the Church; and over them too Napoleon extended the net of his inexorable system.

The liberty of the press had been one of the principles of the Revolution; how little it had been realised in practice may be illustrated by the following decree of the Convention:—"Whoever shall be convicted of having composed or printed works or writings which urge the dissolution of the national representation, the re-establishment of the Monarchy or of any other power incompatible with the sovereignty of the people, shall be brought before the special tribunal and punished with death."

The principle thus insulted by the Revolution Napoleon did not even profess to accept:—"If I were to re-establish the liberty of the press, I should immediately have thirty Royalist journals and as many Jacobin, and I should have to govern again with a minority." As he silenced opposition in the Tribune so he silenced it in the press; he subjected journals and books to the censure; limited the number of political journals; prohibited printing and publishing except under licence; and revoked the licence if anything was produced "contrary to the duties of subjects towards the Sovereign and the security of the State."

The censure was exercised strictly; for example, a passage of Mme. de Staël was suppressed because it placed the *Iphigeneia* of Goethe above that of Racine; journals were forbidden to speak of religion, or to mention the word Jesuit; their news was confined to what was furnished by the bulletins of the police; "every piece of news," wrote the Emperor, "that is disagreeable and disadvantageous to France they ought to put in quarantine, since they ought to suspect that it is dictated by the English." Nor was it enough for journalists to abstain from criticising the Government; they were expected actively to support it; "tell them," wrote Napoleon, "that I shall not judge them by the evil things that they have said, but by the good things that they have not said:" if they could not conform to these conditions their journals were suppressed or appropriated. Such restriction of the press was an inevitable corollary of a despotism, and none of the freer Governments that succeeded were able altogether to dispense with it; it was moreover a negative rather than a positive measure, and far less radical in its effects than the system we are next to examine.

§ 10. Education.

Napoleon's conception of education was purely political; he regarded it as a machinery for the production of efficient subjects:—"In the establishment of a teaching body," he said, "my principal aim is

to have a means of directing political and moral opinions;" for "so long as people are not taught from their childhood whether they are to be republicans or monarchists, catholics or freethinkers, the State will not form a nation; it will rest on vague and uncertain bases, and be constantly subject to change and disorder." In accordance with this principle he drew up his scheme of education; he established a single university, with a corporate existence and independent property; its officers were a Grand Master, a Chancellor, and a Treasurer, all appointed by the Emperor; they were assisted by a Council, composed of ten permanent members, nominated by the Emperor, and twenty annual members, nominated by the Grand Master. To this body was entrusted the absolute control of higher as well as elementary education; every teacher and official in the public colleges and schools was nominated by the Grand Master; every regulation of studies and discipline issued from him and his Council. Private schools already existing were swept into the system; they were compelled to hold a licence from the Government, of which they might be deprived for misconduct; they were only allowed to give instruction up to a certain standard; in towns where there was a public school they were only allowed to teach what was not taught there, and for all other subjects were compelled to send their pupils to its classes; they were forbidden to take in boarders unless the public school was full. The Catholic seminaries were subjected to even severer

restrictions; only one was allowed to exist in each department, and for these the university drew up the regulations and supplied the teachers.

Such a system could not be imposed without resistance; it was not easy at first to secure pupils and satisfactory teachers; the first difficulty was met by the discouragement of all competing institutions; the second by the creation of normal schools, whose pupils received, at last, the monopoly of every post in the teaching hierarchy. Thus, in the end, teachers and taught were made to pass through the same system, and take the same permanent stamp; that stamp was the Emperor's head. "All the schools of the university will take as the basis of their instruction fidelity to the Emperor, to the imperial monarchy, the guardian of the happiness of the nations, and to the Napoleonic dynasty, the preserver of the unity of France and of all the liberal ideas proclaimed by the constitutions." The decree is definite and clear, and it was fulfilled to the letter; the university became a factory of soldiers and civil servants: the Government was military; so were the schools; they had their uniform, their drum-calls and their drill; "the masters were sergeants, the class rooms barracks, the games manœuvres, the examinations reviews;" bulletins of the latest victories were officially announced in class; and service under the Emperor was the recognised and approved ideal: the Government was Catholic; so were the schools; but not too much so; "our boys must be neither bigots nor sceptics; they

must conform to the state of the nation and of society." The curriculum was adjusted to this conception; mathematics were encouraged because of their practical utility; classics, for the sake of the examples of discipline offered by Sparta and Rome; but all speculation, all culture, all of which liberty is an essential condition, so far as regulation could suppress it, was suppressed. The end of education was not Man; it was Napoleon and the State.

§ 11. The Church.

Religion, like education, was too important an influence to be allowed independent action. The Revolution had destroyed the organisation of the Church; Napoleon determined to restore it, and use it for his own ends. There must be an established religion, as a guarantee of order and a prophylactic against fanaticism; but it must be established under the control of the Government. "Conceive," said Napoleon, "the insolence of these priests! in the division they make with what they are pleased to call the temporal power, they keep to themselves all authority over the mind, that is, over the nobler part of man, while they circumscribe my authority to an influence over the body. They appropriate the soul, and fling me the carcase." The idea was preposterous: the control of religion must be vested in the Sovereign; "it is impossible to govern without it." To effect this end, Napoleon had recourse to the Pope; "if he

had not existed," he said, "I should have had to create him for this occasion." The conception of utilising the Pope was a bold one, but it was in harmony with Napoleon's larger aims; in the world-empire to which he aspired it was necessary that the soul as well as the body, the spiritual as well as the temporal powers, should be subject to his domination: his object, as he said himself, was "to have the control of the Pope; and then what influence! what a lever of opinion on the rest of the world!" It was in this spirit that he concluded the Concordat of 1801. The Revolution had caused a schism between the clergy who refused and those who accepted the civil constitution of 1791; this schism it was necessary to heal; it was accordingly agreed that the Pope should demand the resignation of all existing bishops, and deprive those who refused; the new appointments were then to be conferred impartially upon both jurors and non-jurors; but they were to be made by the Government: the Pope retained the right of institution; but, in return, he confirmed the sales of church property, and accepted the position of the clergy as salaried officials of the State. By the "organic articles" published in 1802 the powers of the Government were still further extended; without its consent no papal brief might be admitted and no council held in France; it appointed the teachers in the Catholic seminaries and imposed upon them the Gallican declaration of 1682; its approval was a condition of the validity of every ordination.

Thus retaining in his own hands the education, appointment, and payment of the Catholic clergy, Napoleon might naturally expect to find in them a disciplined and serviceable army; there remained, however, the smaller sects of the Protestants and the Jews. The Revolution had professed the principle of toleration; Napoleon accepted and realised it in the service of his own interests: side by side with the Catholic Church he established that of the Jews and of the two chief Protestant sects; here too he assigned to himself the nomination of the clergy, and, in the case of the Protestants, made them pensioners of the State; he thus both formally admitted the right of dissent to exist, and made its existence subserve the purposes of his own system; henceforth there was no authorised priest whose office did not depend on the Government, and consequently no congregation that was not instructed in political orthodoxy: "My Lord Bishop," said Fouché, Minister of Police, "between your functions and mine there is more than one point of similarity."

Even the Emperor was satisfied; from every pulpit in France his greatness and glory were extolled; his victories were praised, his policy defended, his enemies anathematised; and service in his regiments publicly commended not only as a privilege but as a sacred duty. "Have you seen," said Napoleon to Roederer, "the charge of the Archbishop of Tours? You couldn't have done it better yourself. He says that the actual government is the legitimate

government; that God scatters thrones and kings according to His good pleasure, and adopts the chiefs that the people prefer. You couldn't have put it better yourself." But the consummation was reached when the official catechism was published, and the following passages became part of the educational system of the country:—

"Question:—What are the duties of Christians with regard to the princes who govern them, and what, in particular, are our duties towards Napoleon I. our Emperor?

"Answer:—Christians owe to the princes who govern them, and we, in particular, owe to Napoleon I., our Emperor, love, respect, obedience, fidelity, military service, and the tributes ordained for the defence of the empire and of his throne. To honour and serve the Emperor is therefore to honour and serve God Himself.

"Q.:—Are there not special motives which ought to attach us more strongly to Napoleon I. our Emperor?

"A.:—Yes; for it is he that God has raised up, in difficult circumstances, to re-establish the public observances of the holy religion of our fathers, and to be its protector. He has restored and preserved public order by his profound and active wisdom; he defends the State by his powerful arm; he has become the anointed of the Lord by the consecration he has received from the sovereign pontiff, head of the universal Church.

"Q.:—What ought to be thought of those who should fail in their duties towards our Emperor?

"A.:—According to the Apostle St. Paul, they would be resisting the order of God Himself and would render themselves worthy of eternal damnation."

Napoleon once regretted that he could not pose, like Alexander, as the son of God; it will be admitted that he did his best to approximate to his ideal.

In spite, however, of this success, the subjugation of the Church was rather apparent than real. The clergy, it is true, had ceased to be an independent corporation; but for that very reason they were driven to rely upon Rome; they had lost their former interest and their former status in France; and their direct dependence on a Government which might or might not be devout, and might or might not be legitimate, was a constant challenge to disaffection. Even the Emperor, at the height of his power, found it hard to reckon with them when he had come into collision with the Pope; and later and less despotic Governments, in spite of the fact that they nominate the bishops, have found the opposition of the Church to be one of the most formidable of their political problems. Napoleon had hoped, when he framed the Concordat, to secularise the Church; "it is the vaccination of religion," he said; "in fifty years there will be none in France." The effect was exactly the contrary; the Church was stronger than ever: but it was no longer Gallican; it was Ultramontane.

§ 12. Conclusion.

The institutions we have thus surveyed, with the exception of the political system, have in the main continued to the present day; the administrative, judicial and financial organisation of the Empire is maintained by the present Republic; the Codes are still in force; the University still subsists; the Concordat is still applied. Napoleon's work was done, and done thoroughly; it remains for us to record the criticism suggested by the course of events. In the first place, the work was that of a despot; *l'état c'est moi* was the maxim of Napoleon as absolutely as it was that of Louis XIV.; it is almost irrelevant even to inquire whether he regarded the State as the end, or himself; for he never seems to have conceived the possibility of a separation of the two interests:—"I swear," he said, and he probably meant it, "that I do nothing except for France; I have nothing in view but her advantage:" her advantage, however, was what the Emperor might determine to be so; there could be no two opinions on the matter; "the French Government represents the Sovereign people; and against the Sovereign there can be no opposition:" this theoretical identification of prince and people is admirably expressed by Roederer:—"The monarch is, in a monarchy, the sensitive and animated object in which the country lives; it is in his interest that the public interest is revealed; the prince is the country

personified; the country has assumed a body, a soul, a spirit, a visage, that it may be better understood, and be more certain of inspiring affection." Napoleon, then, was the brain, the conscience and the will of France; if there were opposition it could not be other than factious; it represented ignorance or individual selfishness: was a tax unpopular? "my wish is to secure the good of my people, and I shall not allow myself to be checked in that course by the murmurs of the taxpayers": was opposition expected to a decree? "a very bad spirit pervades the French commercial world:" did the Tribunate criticise a project of law? it was a "disorganising institution." Theoretically, the people were still supreme; theoretically the Empire was their creation; but there was one official interpreter of their will, and against his interpretation there was no appeal. There can be little doubt, it is true, that when first Napoleon assumed the government the opinion of the country was with him; he was the representative of order, and order was the crying need: neither can it be said that he destroyed liberty, for there was no liberty to destroy; all that he did was to substitute despotism for anarchy: but despotism was the condition of reorganisation, and as such it was welcomed by a people distracted by a decade of revolution: it brought with it, nevertheless, its inevitable Nemesis; as the power of Napoleon extended so did his ambition, and his real support in the nation diminished in equal proportion; he tempted with his honours and titles, he

dazzled by his brilliant achievements, but the fact remained that his interest had ceased to be the interest of France; he drained her wealth and life in pursuit of the empire of the world, and the conception of a world-empire was nothing but an historical anachronism; to this conception he had sacrificed the lives of some two millions of his subjects, only at last to hand over his country, shorn of the conquests of the Revolution, of Belgium, Savoy, and the left bank of the Rhine, to the domination of that Bourbon house which was identified with all the abuses it had cost ten years of anguish to expel.

The despotism of Napoleon vanished with himself, leaving behind a tradition; but his centralisation remained as the form and expression of modern France. He had inherited from the ancient monarchy, and, for that matter, from the Revolution, the conception of the State as the end and the individual as the means; like Robespierre and St. Just, he recurred to the ideal of the ancient world; the individual citizen was to be merely a cog in the vast machine of the State; the well-being of the whole was to be sought, at the cost of the well-being of every part; in the civil service, as in the army, in the school and in the Church, military discipline must prevail; no initiative and no responsibility except what was delegated from above; no activity without superior direction, no unauthorised experiments, no deviation to bye-paths, no private and self-sufficient ends; religion must not be embraced as the mistress and

interpreter of life, it is nothing but a handmaid to the State, a guarantor of social order; education must not be conceived as the nurse of independent thought, it is nothing but a mechanical prompter of the hypotheses on which the government rests; the end of life is not life, but conformity to an arbitrary order; there is no future, no development, no ideal; a society is a congeries of individuals, moved by the spring of self-interest; these interests must be flattered or coerced into a superficial appearance of harmony; and I, Napoleon, I, am the man appointed to do it. This conception of the State is at the bottom of all Napoleon's work; everything proceeds from the centre, nothing from the extremities; no place is left for individual or local activity. The system thus established was a weapon in the hands of every succeeding Government; it could be used with as ruthless severity by a republic as by a despot; and though it might be employed in the interest of a liberal and progressive policy, it was and remained, in itself, a perpetual contradiction to liberty. If, therefore, there were any vitality in the ideal of the Revolution, if it represented a genuine need and a genuine tendency, and one that was not satisfied and exhausted by the mere abolition of feudalism, an opposition would be created and maintained not only against any temporary phase of political despotism, but against the despotism, more permanent and pervasive, of the system of centralisation; such opposition, in fact, did arise, and found its most em-

phatic exponent in the Communist insurrection of 1871. Surveying, then, the work of Napoleon in its relation to the principles of the Revolution, we come to the following conclusions:—equality he so far established that he substituted, as the basis of society, service for privilege, and distributive justice for favour; and this part of his achievement was so effective and final, that it was impossible, even for the Bourbon monarchs when they returned, to restore to the nobles and clergy their former rights and exemptions. Liberty, on the other hand, he made no attempt to realise, though the word was always in his mouth; not only did he govern despotically himself, but he stamped the form of despotism on the State: his personal supremacy was killed at Leipzig and buried at Waterloo, though its ghost survived and haunted France till it re-embodied itself in Napoleon III.; the supremacy of the State remained and remains to this day, the substance to which changes of political form are so many irrelevant accidents. Meantime, the Revolution had still its problem before it; it had escaped from a decade of anarchy to fall into despotism; it escaped from political despotism, no longer fluid and mobile, but fixed, as it seemed, for ever, in the mould of centralisation; and it escaped to fall once more into the hands of the Bourbon kings. Its further efforts and progress towards its still remote ideal will be traced in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER III

THE RESTORATION

E. HAMEL. "Histoire de France."
F. R. DARESTE DE LA CHAVANNE. "Histoire de la Restauration."
E. DAUDET. "Histoire de la Restauration."
P. THUREAU-DANGIN. "Le Parti Libéral sous la Restauration."
P. THUREAU-DANGIN. "Royalistes et Républicains."
GUIZOT. "Mémoires."
BROGLIE. "Souvenirs."
H. TAINE. "Les philosophes Français du xixe siècle."
Works of MAISTRE, BONALD, and LAMENNAIS.

CHAPTER III

THE RESTORATION

§ 1. The Intellectual Revival.

The issue of the idealism of the Revolution in a despotism confessedly based upon material interests, had tended to discourage or extinguish all creeds but that of force. Not only was thought constrained from without by the pressure of the Government, it had lost, or appeared to have lost, its own internal spring: "What at that time was the direction of thought?" wrote Charles de Rémusat, "To whom did it even occur to think? What great idea did not pass for a chimera? There was a general disenchantment, in which glory and liberty were involved with the rest. Principles were excluded from politics. The Revolution had ceased to inspire enthusiasm; but, since its material results were not disputed, it did not complain. Morality was gradually reducing itself to the practice of the useful virtues; it was valued as a condition of order, not as a source of dignity. Religion, though it was accepted as a political necessity, was excluded from discussion, enthusiasm,

proselytism; it appeared to be as useless to dispute as it was out of place to defend it. A literature devoid of inspiration testified to the prevalent intellectual frigidity; and, above all, a need of repose, explicable enough under the circumstances of the time, but none the less blind and pusillanimous, subdued and enervated the noblest hearts. Deceived in all its hopes, weary of its hazardous experiments, the reason appeared at length to acquiesce in its humiliation." From this torpor of acquiescence France was aroused by the Restoration; with the King returned the Royalist ideal, and it was confronted with that of the Revolution: a larger measure of liberty than had ever been enjoyed before opened an arena for the conflict; genius evoked strife, and strife kindled genius; theory clashed with theory, thought engendered thought, and ideas began to move upon a troubled sea of parties: not only did the press and the tribune become a power in the State, but philosophy, history, poetry, sprang into new life and discovered a new direction: Chateaubriand and Lamartine infused into literature the spirit of romance; Guizot applied philosophy to the appreciation of the past; Maistre and Lamennais developed the theory of ultramontanism; Cousin endeavoured to plumb the profound metaphysics of Germany; Béranger sang his popular politics; the *Constitutionnel*, the *Globe*, the *Censeur*, the *Quotidienne*, echoed contemporary opinion; and Royer-Collard, Serre, Bonald, Labourdonnaye resumed in the Chambers the broken

tradition of parliamentary eloquence: thought had awakened from its enchanted sleep; it had become again a political force; and it is necessary for the understanding of the period to take some account of its progress.

§ 2. The Philosophy of the Reaction.

The political philosophy of the Revolution had been refuted by the Revolution itself: an attempt had been made to put its principles into action; the attempt had issued in disaster, and its opponents were not likely to neglect to enforce the moral: they did more: not content with denying what Rousseau and Voltaire had affirmed, they went so far as to re-affirm all that they had denied: among the French authors of the beginning of the century there are three prominent names—Maistre, Bonald, Lamennais—all of whom represent not only a negative reaction against the principles of 1789, but a positive return to those of the Middle Ages: they dispute the assumptions of the eighteenth century, show that they logically lead to scepticism, and invoke, against that desolating void, the dogma of Divine Revelation. The argument, developed at length, and with many variations, in their works, may be grasped in its general form and summarised as follows.

It had been stated or implied by the followers of Rousseau that man was naturally good, and that his corruption was due to society: to this Maistre replied, that man, in fact, was bad, and that his

corruption was due to himself: original sin was the ultimate fact, without which nothing could be explained, and original sin carried with it its correlative, original evil: evil, therefore, could not be cured by re-arranging society; it was the ultimate fact, the nature and law of the world; brute preys on brute, and man on man, death is the condition of life, and war its character and essence; "do you not hear the earth crying and asking for blood?" "without interruption, in this place or that, human blood is bound to flow:" it is not true that "all is good," as Condorcet and his friends had maintained; on the contrary, "all is evil," since everything is out of place: this evil is not injustice, it is Divine retribution, for "there is no such thing in all the earth as an innocent man:" the fact is attested and symbolised by the public executioner; "take away from the world that incomprehensible agent, and in a moment order gives place to chaos, thrones are engulphed, and society dispersed:" the scaffold and the block are the type of the world; they are as old as it and as deathless: is illustration wanted of the permanent truth of this doctrine? Let the Revolution attest it! It started with the federation feasts and culminated in the Reign of Terror! Idealism has refuted itself; let us return and rest upon facts!

The followers of Rousseau had maintained that society was founded on a contract; that men had come together and agreed, for their own advantage, to submit their individual wills to the general will of the

whole: but, says Bonald, a contract presupposes a society; the theory of Rousseau assumes the very thing it pretends to account for, and the mystery remains unsolved till we seek its explanation in God. Moreover, continues Maistre, a contract implies deliberation, and never was any society deliberately produced: association is the inevitable result of the nature of men and things; its bond is the mystery of life, not the lucidity of mechanism: to attempt, as the Revolution had attempted, to build a constitution in the air, on the basis of abstract propositions, is to attempt the impossible; every constitution that has had real validity existed before it was written, and in its explicit form was merely the expression of rights already guaranteed in fact: the constitution of 1791 was abortive *because* it was the work of reason; and here again the Revolution supplies the refutation of its own philosophy.

The followers of Rousseau had maintained that authority is derived from the people; but what, asks Maistre, is the people?—a collection of heterogeneous individuals! there is no such thing as Man in the abstract, and no such thing as a "general will;" where is the unity in this plurality, the whole among these isolated parts? Self-interest, it is replied, is the principle of cohesion: but all interests conflict, and all, *ex-hypothesi*, have equal claims; why should I submit mine to yours, and you yours to mine? The "will of all" is resolved at once into a conflict of all individual wills, and the only ultimate arbiter is the

force of the luckiest and strongest. Once more, the Revolution is its own damnation; it founded its authority on the people, and maintained it by the Committee of Public Safety.

The followers of Rousseau had maintained that as there is a "natural man," so there is a "natural morality," and a "natural religion:" if that be so, asks Lamennais, where is its criterion to be found? Is it your opinion, or mine, or his? The prophets disagree among themselves; Herbert, Bolingbroke, Chubb, Rousseau, each has his own doctrine; who is to judge between them? and by what law or standard? Rousseau accepts the existence of God and the immortality of the soul; but why? and how can he maintain his assertions? "Natural religion is nothing but a gulf to swallow up every dogma;" and natural morality fares no better: "Be just, that is enough," said Voltaire, "all the rest is arbitrary;" "The duties of morality," said Rousseau, "are the only ones essential;" but what is justice? what are the duties of morality? is Voltaire to define them? or is Rousseau? or are you? or am I? the principle of the sovereignty of the conscience is as futile as that of the sovereignty of the people; both refer the problem to the individual judgment; both invoke confusion, only to take refuge in despotism: the Revolution began with universal toleration; it culminated in the tyranny of atheism.

The hypotheses, then, of the revolutionary philosophy were as false in theory as they had been

disastrous in practice; they were not principles at all, they were merely scepticism in disguise: where, then, was truth to be found? for in scepticism it was impossible to rest: "There is in man," says Lamennais, "a something which offers an invincible resistance to destruction, a certain vital faith; whether he wish it or not he must believe, because he must act and must maintain himself:" there must, then, be a truth; but it could not be a truth of reason, for reason led to scepticism; it must therefore be a truth of authority, and of authority beyond dispute: such an authority, our authors assert, can only be found in God: his existence they endeavour to prove by the facts of language and thought, and having established that, proceed with security in their work of construction: God, in the beginning, revealed to man with his primary words his primary ideas; these are fixed once for all, so many, neither more nor less, definite, final, without appeal: "There exist necessarily, for all intelligences, an order of truths primitively revealed—that is to say, received originally from God, as the conditions of life, or rather as life itself; and these truths of faith are the immovable foundation of all spirits, the bond of their society and the law of their existence:" these "truths of faith" are accepted in all societies, and expressed in all languages; they reveal the existence of God, His relations to man, and the relations of men to one another; and are found to involve, curiously enough, the whole constitution of the *ancien régime:* sovereignty is derived from

God; as He rules the world, so does the Pope the Church, the King the State, the father the family; as these lesser sovereigns are ministers of God, so they in turn have ministers of their own, the Pope his priests, and the King his nobles; and as God is eternal, so do they imitate eternity by hereditary titles and functions, and by the permanence of territorial status: this apparently complex society is merely a maturer form of that primitive organisation of the family which is as old as the world itself; it is the complete expression of the one original revelation, and cannot, therefore, be developed, though it may be, and has been, corrupted: "king, nobles, and people," "pope, priests, and laymen," are the formulæ that solve society, as "God, Christ, mankind," is the formula that solves the universe: the world is constructed in trinities, fitted, like boxes, one within another; and every member of every triad has its peculiar functions and powers, preordained at the constitution of the world, attested by the rudiments of language, and implied in the rudiments of thought: either, then, there is no society, or society assumes the mediæval form; so only can it endure, so only, properly speaking, can it exist.

§ 3. The Party of the Reaction and the Constitution.

A theory so absolute as this could never make terms with the Revolution: the Revolution had tried to found a State on the diametrically opposite hypotheses; such a State was not only immoral, it was impossible; unfortunately, however, it existed, and the Government of the Restoration accepted it: all of the Revolution that Napoleon had adopted, and all which he had built upon it, it was practically impossible for Louis XVIII. to destroy: he made no attempt to do so; he confirmed the confiscation of the property of the *émigrés;* he admitted the toleration of non-Catholic sects; he retained the administrative, judicial and fiscal system of the Empire; he retained even the Concordat—in a word, he definitely accepted the abolition of the privileges and powers of the nobility and the Church: he went even further than this; "voluntarily," to use his own words, "and by the free exercise of his royal authority, in his own name and in that of his successors for ever, he made to his subjects a concession and gift of a constitutional charter:" by this act he established a Chamber of Peers and a Chamber of Deputies, to exercise, in conjunction with himself, the legislative power; that is to say, he deliberately resigned a portion of his absolute and divine authority.

A State so constituted was only a compromise between the Revolution and the Ancient Monarchy:

it was based on the divine right of kings, yet it limited their power by a written constitution; it admitted Catholicism as the State religion, yet it tolerated other creeds; it retained the nobility as a separate order, yet refused to restore their original status, to endow them with territorial supremacy, and with a monopoly of public functions; it recognised the ministry of the Church, yet withheld from it the control of thought, of education, of marriage, of the registers of birth and death: it thus was far from conforming to the demands of the absolute theory, whose supporters accordingly formed a party of extreme reaction, advocating a revolutionary return to the pre-revolutionary institutions. The criticism of this party on the State as it was, found its bitterest and ablest exponent in Lamennais: the law, he declares, is atheist, since it tolerates all sects; the Church is impotent, since it is subject to the State: it has no property in the soil, no place in the representative system, therefore no economic and no political status; it has lost the control of the family, through the institution of civil marriage, and the deposition of the registers of birth and death with the mayors; it has lost the control of its own discipline through the suppression of its tribunals; it has become a parody of itself, and so has the State that maintains it, for the monarchy inevitably decays with the decay of the religious principle: the nobles are no longer a ruling caste, they are merely a section of a democratic parliament; the Ministers are no longer servants of the King, they

are the responsible agents of the Chambers; the King himself is nothing but a "venerable memory of the past," the inscription on an ancient temple transferred to the front of a jerry-built tabernacle.

It is because it gave support to this practical opposition that the theory we have been examining has a certain importance: it was a theory of extremes —ultramontanism or atheism, absolutism or democracy; and therefore it was specially adapted to become the exponent of a party of passion, and to give expression in terms of thought to the instinctive tendencies of the counter-revolution: it was said of the Bourbons when they returned, and it was literally true of many of their adherents, that they had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing: *émigrés* returned from abroad, country gentlemen emerged from the provinces; deprived of their privileges and estates, afflicted and outraged by the brutality, the robbery, the proscriptions of the Reign of Terror, they saw in the Revolution nothing but its crimes, and in the society it had inaugurated nothing but its injustice; they were the ghost of the *ancien régime*, crying for vengeance on its murderers; all compromise was treason, all opposition rebellion; a Moderate was a Jacobin in disguise; the King himself was little better: statesmen of their own party are aghast at their exaltation; Villèle describes them as *énragés;* the King dubs them *fous;* "you can't imagine," writes Corbière, "the trouble it costs to drive into their heads a piece of common-sense;" "the violence of this party,"

says Broglie, "both in the Chamber and out of it, at the tribune and in the galleries, in trousers or petticoats, recalled, feature for feature, the worst days of the National Convention:" they had accepted the Charter with regret on the eve of its promulgation; and they were not able to conceal how repugnant it was to them: their instincts pushed in the same direction as the convictions of men like Bonald; they claimed for the nobles the supremacy of territorial and official influence, and for the Church the control of thought and social life; the "equality" established by Napoleon, the "liberty" granted by the King, appeared to them not the foundation of the future, but a purposeless encumbrance on the past; there was one order, and only one, that of the *ancien régime*, and the actual state of France was nothing but an immoral transaction with anarchy.

§ 4. The Revolutionary Left.

The party thus formed received the name of "Ultras"; and the complement to this extreme "Right" was a revolutionary "Left": this included all who were actively opposed to the Bourbon dynasty, and was less a party than an agglomeration of elements, united rather negatively by opposition to the Government than positively by any common ideal; its chief material strength was among the adherents of the Empire, and especially among the soldiers who had been retired on half-pay: to these the return of the Emperor was merely

a matter of time; they were moved by the wildest rumours; now he had escaped from St. Helena by an "immense subterranean passage," now he had collected an army of Persians, Turks and Moors, now he was "making astonishing progress" in America; they refused to believe in his death; sooner or later he would land in France and lead them to "revenge for Waterloo:" this *débris* of the armies of the Emperor was a material ready made for insurrection; it was organised by secret societies with which even members of the Chamber were connected; among the deputies of the Left, for example, Lafayette, Manuel, and d'Argenson, were directly concerned with plots against the Bourbons, and Constant, Lafitte, and others were well aware of their existence; and in the years 1820–1822 there was actually produced, with the connivance of these men, a series of abortive insurrections.

§ 5. Liberal Thought.

It was not, however, this party of revolution that really developed the revolutionary ideal; they were too negative in their attitude to be anything but an instrument of destruction; they might have overthrown a dynasty but they could not have founded a constitution, and it is to a different section of the Liberals that we must look for the rational evolution of liberal ideas.

For evolution there must be: it was not only in the judgment of its opponents that the philosophy of the Revolution was discredited; it was discredited in

the judgment of all thinking men: some surer basis must be found for the facts of the new society, some profounder interpretation be offered of the formula "liberty, equality, sovereignty of the people" than any that could be elicited from the works of Rousseau, or the speeches and acts of his disciples: the problem was not merely political, it was metaphysical; if the mediæval theory of society were false, what was to take its place? if the authority of the Church were denied, what could be set up as a substitute? if appeal were made to the human reason, what were its laws and what its axioms? There was no mean, Lamennais had argued, between irrational dogma and scepticism; what was the escape from the dilemma, or, at least, in what direction should escape be sought?

The problem which faced the Liberals of the Restoration is still the problem of modern thought; it involves two elements; first, the deduction, from *à priori* grounds, of a motive and ideal of life, secondly the application of this general theory to the particular conditions of existing society; the first is the work of metaphysics, and was, at the beginning of the century, the main pre-occupation of German thought, the second is the work, in part, of a philosophical study of history; and the Liberal thought of the Restoration is active in both these fields: Royer-Collard had already begun a reaction against the materialism of Locke; his work was continued by a later generation, and especially by Victor Cousin: Cousin had travelled in Germany; he had made the personal

acquaintance of Schelling and of Hegel; he had even made some kind of acquaintance with their ideas; and he returned to dazzle his class at the Sorbonne at once by the charm of his eloquence and by the liberating vigour of his doctrine: if he had not the profundity to create a school, he had at least the genius to stimulate thought; and the interest he provoked was all in the direction of a synthetic idealism: metaphysics had escaped from the prison in which the eighteenth century had confined it; it began to expand in the sunshine, to vivify every problem, to colour every interest, and to dazzle the new generation with the vision of a positive doctrine, based upon absolute reason, independent of unproved and unprovable tradition, accepting, interpreting, and organising the chaos of modern facts and modern ideas.

While Cousin was thus introducing to France the metaphysical idealism of Germany, others were inaugurating a serious and critical study of history; Thiers and Mignet were writing their works on the Revolution, Augustine Thierry his book on the Norman Conquest, Guizot his Lectures on Civilisation; different as were the immediate aims and the methods of these writers, they have yet this common character, that they approach history with a view to the light it throws upon politics; here, as in philosophy, the preoccupation was with the present; it was the object of Thiers and Mignet to justify the Revolution against the "Ultras"; it was the object of Guizot, in describing the *ancien régime*, "to sift the ideas of our own time,

and separate the ferment and visions of the Revolution from that progress of justice and liberty which is accordant with the eternal laws of social order."

But it was not only in lectures and books that the Liberals carried on their campaign; like their opponents, Bonald, Chateaubriand, and the rest, they, too, made use of the press; Guizot started the *Revue Française* as the organ of the "Doctrinaires"; Thiers and Mignet wrote in the *Constitutionnel;* and in 1824 appeared the first number of the *Globe:* this journal is, in some respects, the most interesting of the period, for it expresses most clearly the need and the hope of a new and positive theory of society; it was equally opposed to the scepticism of Voltaire and to the dogmatism of the "Ultras"; its contributors had formed the conception of a "new faith," and "to this ravishing perspective they attached themselves with enthusiasm, with conviction, with resolution"; morals, religion, politics, literature, all were crying for regeneration; the doctrines of the past were exhausted and sterile; and it was the part of the new generation to discover and preach a new gospel.

The problem which the writers of the *Globe* announced they were not in a position to solve; they never agreed on a definite system, nor advocated a definite policy; but at the time that they were proclaiming the need of a new synthesis, there were already being published the attempt of St. Simon and his followers to supply it; the organ of their doctrine was the *Producteur*, published in 1825–6; the

doctrine itself we shall take another opportunity to examine; it is mentioned here as the completest expression of the effort of speculation at this period to pass through scepticism to a new and comprehensive theory, founded at once on experience and reason, and expressing the general form which the society of the future will tend to assume.

Meantime, however, the more characteristic attitude of liberal thought was one less of systematic construction than of passionate and hopeful inquiry; it perceived the inadequacy of the philosophy of the Revolution to found a new society, it refused to recur to the ideas and institutions of the Middle Ages, and in default of the synthesis it sought, was content to wait, to search and to resist; if the alternative—anarchy or the Pope—were to be faced, as Lamennais had faced it, it was anarchy rather than the Pope that the Liberals would choose to accept; to the formula of the Catholic revival—no Pope, no Church; no Church, no Christianity; no Christianity, no Religion; no Religion, no Society—the *Globe* replied as follows, with an audacity as much, or as little, sublime: "Truth has ceased to be universal. Traversed by every kind of doubt, face to face with a thousand different religions, a thousand contradictory systems, seeking without tutor or priest the solution of the great problem of God, of Nature and of man, individual minds have proclaimed themselves sovereign, each on its own account; whether this anarchy of intelligence be conducive to happiness

or the reverse, makes no difference to the issue; it is an anarchy that is now our chief desire, our chief good, our life; and that is why the law has established and consecrated anarchy."

§ 6. The Centres.

As there was a section of liberal thinkers who, instead of idly repeating the formulæ of 1789, endeavoured to supplement, to correct, and to interpret them anew, so there was a section of liberal politicians who, instead of aiming at the subversion of the Government, sought to develop and apply their ideas under the conditions of constitutional opposition: France was enjoying for the first time, since 1789, some real measure of free and representative government; so long as the Charter was maintained, so long as the opinion even of so restricted an electorate was a real power in the country, so long it was possible for the defenders of the new society to work upon parliamentary lines; and that was the course adopted by what was known as the "Left Centre," and especially by the group of the "Doctrinaires": the leaders of this group were Royer-Collard in the Deputies and Broglie in the Peers, and their policy was summed up in the motto of the *Revue Française*, "Et quod nunc ratio est impetus ante fuit"; they endeavoured to reconcile the antipathies of the old and new order, and to merge both extremes in a party of gradual and rational progress; "we

were at once with and against the Government," says Guizot, "Royalists and Liberals, Ministerialists and Independents;" they approved the Bourbon monarchy as a guarantee of order, but only because, through the Charter, it also guaranteed liberty; under it, they imagined, it would be possible, though only by slow degrees, to educate the country in the practice of representative institutions, and to establish, at least, some measure of that self-government which the Revolution had brought to a premature and abortive birth; the "Doctrinaires" were thus a constitutional party of progress, as opposed to that section of the Liberals which was actively opposed to the Bourbon dynasty; they were more positive than negative, more anxious to realise a little than to aim at and miss everything, more concerned with the practice than with the abstract dogma of liberty; they were at once the opponents and the perpetuators of the Revolution, opponents of its philosophy and methods, perpetuators of that vital and positive impulse which underlay its expression in facts.

To this section of the Left corresponded, on the other side, a "Right Centre," attached by tradition and sentiment, as well as by connection, to the Monarchy, but accepting, without reservation, the conditions imposed by the "Charter;" as the Doctrinaires were the constitutional party of the Left, so were these the constitutional party of the Right, distinguishing themselves from the "Ultras" by their opposition to

measures of reaction, and by their frank adherence to the compromise which the King himself had adopted; they were the real supporters of the Monarchy as it was actually constituted at the Restoration, and found their best exponent in the Duc de Richelieu.

§ 7. Party Passion.

From this examination of the state of parties it will be seen that the condition of a stable government was the union of the Right and the Left Centres in a body agreed to support the Constitution, though divided, within the limits of that agreement, into a Liberal and a Conservative section; this would have been the parliamentary system as we understand it in England; but by the circumstances of the time its application was practically impossible in France: representative government was a new experiment, and it was being made on the top of a revolution; revolution was the policy of the Extreme Left, and counter-revolution of the Extreme Right; the new society stood like a separate nation against the old; an opposition which arose from incompatibility of interests had become, during years of conflict, a passionate and irrational instinct; Napoleon had suppressed it by force, the Restoration undertook to reconcile it in liberty; but this was a harder task: liberty of debate meant liberty of passion, and passion was always on the verge of revolution; a journal might act as a centre of disaffection, a speech or a pamphlet as a call to arms; in the press and in

the Chamber were opposed not merely two parties but two traditions, two creeds, two armies in battle array: "Our age," said Serre in 1820, "has presented a new phenomenon; disorder has been made into a system; anarchy, openly professed, has its maxims, its gospel, its apostles; . . . . every journal is a centre for the party of inveterate revolutionists, of adventurers, of young men led astray; every journal founds a club; these clubs are affiliated; the whole kingdom is entangled in a net; it is traversed by an organisation co-extensive with the public administration and ready in a moment to overthrow it:" the insurrections of 1820–1822 were the justification of this charge. But violence was not confined to the Liberal Press; a journal of the Right, for example, describes the Ministry of Villèle (who was himself considered by Liberals as the champion of reaction) as "violent, sterile, incapable, subversive, reeling like a drunken man in the midst of a prudent and intelligent people; and apparently making it an aim to trouble all interests, irritate all consciences, and treat as enemies glory, genius, liberty and virtue." And if the war of the press was fierce, not less so was that of the Chambers; there were met in the same room men who had joined the camp of the emigrants at Coblentz, and men who had sat in the Convention and approved the execution of the King; reproach and counter-reproach, taunt and indignant rejoinder, were inevitable and common; "between 1790 and 1814," the Right had maintained on one occasion, "there were nothing but

rebels in France;" "so," cried Manuel, "up to March 31, 1814, all that happened in France was crime and revolt?" "Yes," from the Extreme Right. "So the purchasers of the national property were nothing but robbers, up to the moment when the Charter declared their possession legitimate?" "Yes!" "Well, gentlemen, since that is your opinion, you should have the courage to declare it frankly to the nation; it remains to be seen whether France is disposed to endure this humiliation; it remains to be seen whether those who had the happiness to remain on the soil of their country, and have shed their blood for the conquest of its liberties, for the defence of its laws and its independence, will consent to accept at your hands this insult and this disgrace." On another occasion Serre apostrophised Lafayette as follows: "When civil war breaks out, the blood is on the head of those who provoked it; the honourable member knows it better than any one else; more than once he has learnt, with death in his soul and a blush on his cheek, that he who excites a furious rabble is obliged in the end to follow, if not to lead them." The point and the force of such invective can only be understood by those who are familiar with the history of the Revolution; who remember the part that had been played in it by Grégoire, Manuel, and Lafayette, all of whom sat as deputies in the Chamber of the Restoration; who realise that not only the political but the social structure of France had been reversed; that the property of hundreds of families had been confiscated

and their lives endangered or forfeited; and that representatives of the numerous sections into which the nation had been rent were summoned now for the first time to sit upon the same benches and to pronounce with real authority upon measures affecting their diverse and conflicting interests: under such circumstances it is not surprising that it was difficult to pursue a policy of reconciliation; the Centres were compromised by the Extremes; each was kept apart from the other by fear of the more violent section of its opponents; and each was driven, from the same cause, in the direction of its own revolutionary wing: it was the Extremes that determined the length of the pendulum's swing, till the increasing violence of its oscillations led to the catastrophe of 1830: revolution was already implicit in the condition of parties and passions; and if it cannot be said that it could not have been avoided, it may at least be maintained that it does not need explanation.

§ 8. The King.

Such, then, were the characteristics and relations of the various political parties; it remains to consider the position of the King. The King was, in fact, as well as in theory, the head of the State; he controlled the administrative system, by the appointment of the prefects, sub-prefects, and mayors; the constitution was his own creation and gift, and in it he had reserved for himself the initiation of laws and the

right of veto; the Deputies and the Peers were merely his advisers, not powers in the State co-ordinate with himself, and in accordance with this view, the qualifications for the franchise were determined upon grounds of expediency, not upon grounds of principle; the only condition imposed by the Charter was that electors must possess a certain minimum property and have attained a certain minimum age (30 years); the rest was left to be determined by law; and in the debates on the electoral laws the discussion really turned, not upon who had a right to vote, but upon what would be the practical effect upon the stability of the existing *régime* of such and such a method of election and such and such a class of votes: the Government existed by its own right, it did not depend upon the suffrages of the people; the latter must therefore be so arranged that they did not endanger the security of the throne; as a result of this policy, the number of electors was restricted to something like 100,000, and over them the Government exercised a considerable control; it could command the votes of its own officials, from the prefect downwards; and it could influence those of other electors, through the presidents of the electoral colleges; in addition to this it might expect the support in the Chamber of public servants who sat as deputies: how vigorously it made use of these various means of influence may be conjectured from the following circular of the Minister Peyronnet, issued at the election of 1824: "Any one who accepts

a Government post contracts at the same time the obligation to consecrate to the service of the Government his efforts, his talents, his influence; it is a contract which binds to reciprocity; if the official refuses to the Government the services it expects from him he breaks his faith and voluntarily infringes the pact of which the office he holds was the object and condition; that is the most undoubted and irrevocable of abdications; the Government has no obligation to one who does not perform his obligations to it."

From the position of the King it might appear to follow that representative government would be as much a farce under the Restoration as it had been under Napoleon; but this was not the case: in spite of the restricted electorate, in spite of the pressure the Government could put upon the voters, in spite of the modification of the electoral law in 1820, it was never found possible to secure a stable and permanent majority under the control of the King; the Chamber tended constantly to be either more liberal or more reactionary than he; and it was the obstinate and repeated return of a majority hostile to the policy of the Crown that led to the *coup d'état*, and the revolution of 1830. Representative government was thus a reality, in spite of the restrictions to which it was subject; but the power and policy of the King was an important element in its operation: the period of the Restoration embraces two reigns, that of Louis XVIII., and that of Charles X.; and each has its own peculiar character and aims: the policy of

Louis XVIII. was reconciliation; "the system which I have adopted," he wrote in 1818, "and that which my Ministers are perseveringly pursuing, is based upon the maxim that it will never do to be the king of two peoples; and to the ultimate fusion of these—for the distinction is only too real—all the efforts of my Government are directed;" the two peoples are of course the adherents of the *ancien régime* and of the Revolution, and in his attempts to unite them the King was continuing the policy of Napoleon; but the conditions were different: Napoleon had stood alone, and above both parties; he had won his position by the sword and it was by the sword that he maintained it; he had no ties, no obligations, no dependency: Louis, on the other hand, had been restored by foreign armies; his strength was not in himself, but in the past that he represented; and his natural allies were all who had opposed and suffered in the Revolution; from the very first, and by the mere fact of his position, he had, even were it in spite of himself, a mechanical bias towards the Right: this bias he endeavoured to resist; but his successor gave way to it: Charles X., as Comte d'Artois, had been the leader of the *émigrés* of the Revolution; he represented uncompromisingly the claims and regrets of the *ancien régime;* he was a devout son of the Church; during the reign of Louis XVIII. he had been the recognised head of the "Ultras," and his accession to the throne was regarded as their triumph; he threw the weight of his influence on

the side of the counter-revolution, and yielding thus to the natural inclination of a Bourbon monarch, destroyed, with the possibility of compromise, the possibility of his own throne.

§ 9. The Situation.

Such, then, were the conditions that prevailed under the Restoration; dogmatism and free thought at war in the schools and in the press; the *ancien régime* and the Revolution standing face to face; conspiracy and armed rebellion against the reigning dynasty; irreconcileable Extremes, distracting and holding at variance the moderate statesmen of the Centres; lastly, at the head of this chaos, a King who retained a substantial power only to employ it, at the end of the period, in an attempt at counter-revolution.

Of these conditions the history of the period is an illustration; it is they, not the events themselves, that are our present object of interest; and it is in order to throw further light upon them, that we proceed to the following summary of the facts.

§ 10. Summary of the Period.

The Restoration opened with a promise of moderation and wisdom; in 1814 the King issued the Charter, accompanied by a preamble which indicates his attitude to the Revolution: "it was our duty," he

says, "according to the example of the Kings our predecessors, to appreciate the results of the constantly increasing progress of enlightenment, the new relations that this progress has introduced into society, the direction impressed upon opinion for half a century, and the grave alterations which have ensued; we have recognised that the wish of our subjects for a constitutional charter was the expression of a real need." The King thus frankly admitted the conditions imposed by the events of the Revolution; the Constitution he published was liberal, when compared with the despotism of Napoleon; it main provisions were as follows:—

The King was assisted in legislation by a Chamber of Peers, and a Chamber of Deputies.

The King proposed and sanctioned laws; the Chambers discussed, amended, and voted them.

Among the Peers were included the Napoleonic, as well as the old nobility. The King had power to create titles, hereditary or not, at his pleasure.

The Deputies were elected by the departments; they must be 40 years old, and pay at least 1000 frs. in direct taxation; they were renewed by a fifth every year.

The electors must be 30 years old and pay at least 300 frs. in direct taxation.

All other electoral conditions were left to be determined by law.

In 1815 the Goverment was interrupted by Napoleon's return from Elba, and the episode of the

"hundred days." This was followed by an outbreak of royalist fanaticism known as the "White Terror;" all the south broke out in tumult; armed bands traversed the country, hunting down the adherents of the Emperor; garrisons suspected of attachment to his cause were attacked and expelled by the populace; Marshal Brune was assassinated at Avignon, General Ramel at Toulouse: these were acts of insurrection for which the Government was not responsible; but they indicate a passion of indignation which extended to the Chamber of Deputies: the Assembly of 1815 was an assembly of "Ultras;" it conceived that it had a mission to punish the "crime" of the 100 days, and it threw itself with zest into the work of reprisals; personal liberty was suspended; special courts were established under military "provosts" to try, without jury and without appeal, cases of rebellion and sedition; informations, arrests, and condemnations multiplied indefinitely; and an act of amnesty, introduced by the Government, was only saved, by a majority of seven, from conversion into an act of proscription. But it was not enough to punish the past, it was necessary also to secure the future; a public opinion must be formed, devoted to "the altar and the throne," for according to the theory of the "Ultras" the two were mutually dependent; to secure the supremacy of the Church was to secure the supremacy of the Crown, and to that object the Chamber proceeded to address itself: it was proposed to reconstitute the property of the clergy in the soil, and

restore them to the economic independence they had possessed before the Revolution; this proposition was too radical to be adopted, but others were more successful; divorce, which had been admitted in the Code Napoléon, was abolished, and all married priests were deprived of their pensions. These measures were important less in themselves than for the current of opinion of which they were the sign, and the prejudices they were calculated to shock; they were the first indications of a policy, which, if it could have been carried out, would have re-established the control of the Church over education, thought and social life; they were the challenge flung to the Revolution by militant and victorious mediævalism. But the Chamber was going too far; it had abused its right of amendment, to reverse the policy of the Crown; its zeal for the institutions of the past was being pushed to the verge of revolution; and the King, in self-defence, determined on a dissolution. This extreme measure he adopted in the September of 1816; it astonished the country almost as a *coup d'état;* it was, in fact, a formal rupture of the crown with the "Ultras," a formal declaration and proof of the policy the King was determined to pursue; and it was completely successful: the new elections returned a Ministerial majority, and for the next three years, under Richelieu and then under Decazes, the moderate views of the Centre were in ascendency in the Chambers and the Ministry.

One of the first acts of the new Chamber was to

determine the method of election; it was decided that all who were qualified by the Charter should vote directly, and by departments, for their representatives in the Chamber; this was regarded as a liberal measure, and proved to be so in its working; at the first renewal of a fifth, in 1817, twenty-five "independents" of the Left were returned; the elections of 1818 produced similar results, and, especially, returned to the Chamber Lafayette and Manuel, both of whom had been notable figures in the Revolution; this growing strength of the Left was a serious danger to the Government, for it represented, or might at any moment represent, an opposition not merely to the Ministry but to the Monarchy itself; Richelieu became anxious and discouraged, he made advances to the Right, endeavoured to reconstitute his Ministry, failed, and eventually resigned, at the end of 1818. Decazes took his place, and continued a moderate policy; in particular, he carried through the Chamber a law on the liberty of the press, which was admittedly a pattern for all subsequent legislation; it was a liberal measure, and the last for many years: the elections of 1819 returned Grégoire as a deputy; Grégoire was one of the most notorious of the revolutionists; he had been a principal advocate of the civil constitution of the clergy, and he had formally recorded his approval of the execution of the King; his election was regarded as a declaration of war; the indignation of the Right was boundless; Grégoire was not allowed to take his seat; and

Decazes recognised the necessity of a change in the electoral law. But before he could present his project, an event had occurred which put an end to his supremacy, and led to the triumph of the Right; in February 1820 the Duc de Berry, son of the Comte d'Artois and heir presumptive to the throne, was assassinated: the act was that of a single man, unsupported by any association, but its effects extended to the whole Liberal party; it was regarded as the outcome of a policy of compromise and an index of what might be expected from its prolonged continuance; the Ministry was destroying the Monarchy; "either Decazes must retire," said Lainé, "before the reigning dynasty, or the race of our kings must retreat before him"; "I saw," said another, "the dagger that pierced the Duc de Berry; it was a liberal idea." The King was unable to resist the clamour; he dismissed his favourite Decazes, and summoned Richelieu in his place: new laws were passed restricting the press and personal liberty, and the electoral law was radically modified; the number of deputies was increased to 400, and of these 172 were to be chosen by that quarter of the electors in each district which paid the highest taxes: the next partial renewal of the Chamber gave a large preponderance to the Right, and the demands of the party increased with their power; Richelieu was too moderate to satisfy them; he fell at the end of 1821, by a combination of the two Extremes, and was succeeded by Villèle.

The Ministry of Villèle lasted from the December of 1821 to the January of 1828; it was a period of ascendency for the Ultras; not that the Minister belonged, except in name, to their party, but that he was unable to resist the pressure they brought to bear: their position was strengthened by the accession of Charles X. in 1824, and by the general election of that year, which reduced the Liberals in the Chamber to something under twenty; to secure the duration of this majority, they substituted for the system of annual renewal by a fifth that of the renewal of the whole Chamber at the end of seven years.

The spirit in which the Ultras exploited their victory may be gathered from the measures they passed: one of their earliest acts was the expulsion of Manuel from the Chamber; in a speech against French intervention in Spain, he had made use of the following phrase:— "The moment in which the dangers of the royal family in France became most serious, was when France, the France of the Revolution, felt that it was necessary for her to defend herself by a new method, by a new energy:" the sentence was regarded as an apology for the execution of Louis XVI.; Manuel was not allowed to conclude it; he was not allowed to explain himself; he was deprived of his seat; and, as he denied the legality of the judgment, was removed from the Chamber by force.

This episode is significant of the violence of the victorious party, a violence which served to compromise what were otherwise statesmanlike measures:

thus in 1823 a proposition was introduced to compensate those who had suffered by the confiscations of the Revolution; the act may be easily defended as just and politic in itself; but it gave opportunity to the Right to advance the most extravagant claims, to assert that the original owners had still a right to their property, that it ought to be restored to them, and the indemnity paid to the actual possessors; and this in spite of a clause in the Charter guaranteeing the *status quo*. Extravagance in the Right provoked extravagance in the Left; and General Foy could count on the support of liberal feeling when he asserted that the law was a "declaration of war, an instrument of hatred and vengeance." If this measure of compensation, equitable enough in itself, appeared to be, under the circumstances, an insult to modern France, much more was this the case with a proposal tending to re-establish the entail of property on the eldest son; the object was to perpetuate a permanent aristocracy of wealth, with an interest in and a tradition of adherence to order and the throne; but no achievement of the Revolution was more universally popular than that which secured an equal division of the inheritance among all the heirs; this "equality" was more than a matter of interest, it was a matter of sentiment; to attack it was a scandal, almost an impiety; tentative as was the measure of the Government, it was so seriously modified in discussion as to be practically ineffectual in the form in which it was passed; the only purpose it had served

was to outrage the strongest prejudice of revolutionary France, and to emphasise its opposition to the devotees of the *ancien régime*.

The policy indicated by the measures referred to tended to the consolidation of a wealthy and permanent aristocracy, devoted to the interests of the Crown; this was one part of the programme of the Ultras; the other was the reconstitution of the supremacy of the Church over education, thought, and family life. The period we are considering is a period of clerical domination; in spite of the prohibition of the laws, the Jesuits had re-established colleges where the sons of the wealthy and noble were educated in considerable numbers. Already, in 1816, the schools of the University had been submitted to the diocesan bishop, who appointed the principals, and had the power to dismiss professors whose opinions were reported as dangerous; the lectures of Villemain, of Cousin, of Guizot were suppressed in Paris; the country was traversed by "missions," involving sensational sermons, processions, the sale of relics and crucifixes, and solemn acts of "reparation" for the crimes of the Revolution; in 1826 Lamennais published his theory of uncompromising Ultramontanism; the same year appeared a pamphlet by Montlosier, giving an account of the aims and methods of the "Congregation": the Congregation was a religious society whose object was the restoration of the Church to its former position of authority; its head was a Jesuit priest; of the

central branch at Paris the King himself was a member, and through the deputies of the Right it exercised a considerable political influence; it had its ramifications and affiliated societies throughout the country; it disposed of offices and favours, and in a hundred ways, directly or indirectly, influenced private and public life in all classes and professions: this, at least, is what was said, and what may very well have been true; at any rate—and that is the point—it is what was believed to be true: passions gathered in fury about the words "Jesuit" and "Congregation"; the missions were met by counter-demonstrations, their sermons answered by "Tartuffe"; modern France rose against the spectre of the Church, as it had risen against the spectre of the aristocracy; and into the midst of this ferment of opinion the Ministry flung their law of Sacrilege (April 1825): it was proposed to punish by the galleys the theft of church vessels; by death, the violent burglary of a church; and by mutilation, followed by death, the profanation of the Host: the latter clause involved the legal recognition of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and was a clear index of the tendency of the party in power; for if sacrilege was to be punished by law, why not blasphemy and heresy? The project was vigorously opposed, and, though passed in a modified form, was never in fact applied. The ecclesiastical policy of the Government was further indicated by a proposal to allow the King to authorise, on his own responsibility, religious

communities of women; it would logically follow that the permission should be extended to all communities, which would thus escape in time from the supervision of the laws, and cover France, as before the Revolution, with independent landed corporations.

The direction in which all this was tending is plain; the extreme section of the Right was pushing the more moderate royalists towards the application of that theory of the Monarchy and the Church which we examined at the beginning of the chapter; but they were pushing them against their will, and the persistence of the pressure was breaking up the majority: the Centre reacted against the Extreme, the anti-clerical against the clerical faction; the liberals, though weak in numbers, were strong enough in talent to embarrass the Government; the Peers had favoured throughout a policy of moderation: Villèle was losing his hold on the Chambers, and at the end of 1827 he had recourse to a dissolution. The new elections condemned the policy of the Government, and justified the boast of General Foy that the Liberals, though they were only twenty in the Chamber, had the country behind them; the Ministerialists were a minority in the new Chamber, and Villèle sent in his resignation. He was replaced by Martignac, who, like Richelieu in 1816, represented the moderates of the Centre; he dissolved the colleges of the Jesuits, and introduced a law in the direction of local self-government; but he was unable to command a stable majority; the Left Centre refused him

their support, as they had refused it to Richelieu in 1818; and in August 1829, he was replaced by Polignac. The choice of Polignac was the inevitable prelude to a *coup d'état;* he was an ultra of ultras, and a prominent member of the Congregation; it was certain that he could not command a majority in the existing Chamber, and a new election resulted only in a large increase of the Opposition. The King had to choose between dismissing his Minister, and annulling the elections; to do the first was to hand over the Government to a party whose extreme was hostile to the dynasty, and whose more moderate members had proved themselves unable to support even a Ministry of compromise; to do the second, was to violate the Charter and to invite insurrection. It was the latter course that the King adopted; in the July of 1830 he published the famous ordinances, which suspended the freedom of the press, annulled the recent elections, and modified the electoral law in the interest of the great land-owners. This was the signal of revolution; the Liberals were already prepared; ever since the appointment of Polignac, they had been warning the country of the imminence of a *coup d'état;* associations had been formed with the view of resisting taxation unconstitutionally imposed; the history of the English Revolution of 1688 had been brought to the front; on the first of January 1830, had appeared the first number of the *National* edited by Thiers; in its pages the idea of a change of dynasty was

constantly, though indirectly, presented; the Charter was to be maintained, but to maintain the Charter it might be necessary to change the King. The attitude of the Opposition was thus constitutional; it invoked revolution only in answer to revolution, and urged resistance to the monarch only in defence of the monarchy; it was the King who was the aggressor by the ordinances of July, while the Liberals were the defenders of the legal *status quo*. They acted accordingly; the day after the publication of the ordinances Thiers and other journalists drew up a protestation declaring them illegal, and the *Temps* and the *National* appeared as usual. The same day barricades were formed, and the mob was fired upon by the troops; the insurrection spread rapidly, and by the 28th, old soldiers of the Empire, students, workmen out of employment, and the innumerable vagrant elements that collect in a great city, had combined in an army of revolt; the resistance of the troops was ineffectual, and in the course of the 29th Paris was lost to the Government. At this point the King agreed to withdraw the ordinances, and form a new Ministry; but now it was too late; Thiers and Mignet had agreed with Laffitte and the deputies of Paris to offer the crown to the Duc d'Orléans, head of the younger branch of the Bourbons. On the 31st the King retired to Rambouillet, and there signed his abdication in favour of the Duke; and the latter accepted the crown, under the title of Louis Philippe.

The verdict of Paris was ratified without resistance by the country, and a new epoch began in the history of modern France.

Such, in brief, was the character and history of the Restoration. From the point of view of the ideal of the Revolution, it was a period of reaction; the dominant philosophy and the dominant tendency of the time reverted to the Middle Ages; the Monarchy and the Church were the two sides of an absolutism based on revelation, and in the strictness of logic political liberty was as incompatible with the one as liberty of thought with the other; by a judicious inconsistency it is true, the extreme application of the theory was avoided; but there was a constant pressure in the direction of its application, and under that pressure, in the end, the Government collapsed. The attitude of Liberals, meantime, could only be that of resistance, either to the dynasty itself, which was the attitude of overt or secret revolution, or to its reactionary tendencies, which was the attitude of the Doctrinaires. The latter were training themselves in the methods and tactics of representative government, and it is among them that the positive development of Liberalism is to be sought. For it is they who were in the ascendant during the reign of Louis Philippe, and it was their interpretation of the ideas of 1789 that was, on the whole, to prevail during the next eighteen years; what that interpretation was will be examined in the next chapter; meantime it is sufficient to note that the revolution of 1830 was a

victory at once against the *ancien régime* and in favour of the Left Centre; against the *ancien régime*, for the monarchy of Louis Philippe rested upon expediency, not on right divine; it had no roots in the past, no dependence on the Church and the old noblesse; it represented the triumph of 1789 over the Middle Ages, a triumph for the second time, and one that was definite and final:—in favour of the Left Centre, for the policy of Louis Philippe was the policy of Guizot, while the extremer sections of the Liberals, its more democratic Monarchists, as well as its already vigorous Republicans, were thrown into an opposition which was to produce, in its time, the revolution of 1848. The main achievement then of the revolution, during the period we have been considering, has been the subversion of the recrudescent ideal of the Middle Ages; delivered from this, its most pressing foe, it proceeds to work its way out of the constitutional monarchy into its logical term, a republic; by what means and with what result, we are to examine in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

THE MONARCHY OF JULY

P. THUREAU-DANGIN. "Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet."

L. GRÉGOIRE. "Histoire de France."

L. BLANC. "Histoire de Dix Ans."

GUIZOT. "Mémoires."

ODILON BARROT. "Mémoires."

E. LEVASSEUR. "Histoire des Classes Ouvrières en France."

A. F. NETTEMENT. "Histoire de la Littérature Française sous le Gouvernement de Juillet."

A. SUDRE. "Histoire de Communisme."

L. REYBAUD. "Études sur les Réformateurs Modernes."

P. JANET. "Saint-Simon et le Saint-Simonisme."

„ "Les Origines du Socialisme Contemporain."

SAINTE-BEUVE. "Proudhon."

SAINT-SIMON. "Nouveau Christianisme."

"Doctrine de Saint-Simon. Exposition."

LAMENNAIS. "Paroles d'un Croyant," &c.

MICHELET. "Le Peuple."

L. VIVIEN. "Etudes Administratives."

ODILON BARROT. "De la Centralisation."

A. BRUGIÈRE DE BARANTE. "De la Décentralisation."

C. DUPONT-WHITE. "La Centralisation."

CHAPTER IV

THE MONARCHY OF JULY

§ 1. The Bourgeois King.

The Government of July was a government of compromise; it was continuous with the Restoration by its form, and divided from it by its origin. What issued from the Revolution of 1830 was not a change in the Constitution, but a change in the person of the monarch; that change however involved a new theory of the monarchy: Louis XVIII. and Charles X. had rested upon their legitimacy; they represented the tradition of centuries, of which the Revolution was an impertinent interruption: this tradition was the source of their strength and also of their weakness; it gave them an impregnable position in theory and a slippery one in practice, for the same connection that established their title compromised their policy: their tendency was inevitably towards reaction, and to this tendency they succumbed; July 1830 was the defeat of the absolute monarchy, and the triumph of the Constitution.

The policy which had ruined Charles X. could not

be that of Louis Philippe; he had no hereditary title to the throne and no support in the pre-revolutionary past; on the contrary, it was the Revolution itself, at least in its earlier stages, to which he was attached by tradition; he was the son of Philippe Égalité, had been connected with the Jacobin club, and had fought at Valmy and Jemappes; later, he had fled to Switzerland where he earned his living as an usher; at the Restoration he had returned to France and had lived thenceforth as a private citizen, a courteous and unpretending gentleman of means, patronising art, attached to his family, careful of his investments, and walking the streets at his ease with an umbrella under his arm. He had no illusions, no theories, and no enthusiasms; he had seen the catastrophe of the Revolution, and foreseen that of the Restoration, and he had no belief in republican or royalist formulæ; what he did believe in was his own experience and judgment, and it was in reliance upon this that he accepted the throne of France.

Such a king, by his antecedents, his position and his character, was a real guarantee against a resumption of the policy of the "ultras"; for he neither shared their beliefs nor depended upon their support. He was the "bourgeois king," the creation of the middle classes; he received the Crown at the Hotel de Ville, under the sponsorship of Lafayette, and was confirmed in his dignity, and approved, by popular demonstrations: an anecdote current at the time in Paris may serve to suggest the kind of

sentiment with which he inspired the public:—An Englishman arrives at Paris a few days after the Revolution of July. His first idea is to betake himself to the interior court of the Palais Royal, where the king was receiving the deputations which kept arriving from all parts of the kingdom, townsmen or villagers, with mayor and drum at their head, bringing their congratulations, their prayers, and their ideas on the conduct of the Government. The Englishman asks if Louis Philippe has appeared. "Certainly," was the reply, "but he has just retired." "Ah, I am very sorry. I came to Paris to see him." "Oh, if that's all," said a bystander, "I'll soon show him to you." And he shouted at the top of his voice: "Long live Louis Philippe! Long live the Charter!" the crowd joining in. A window opens on a balcony; the king appears. He salutes humbly and retires. "Delightful!" said the Englishman, "delightful, but I was told one could see him with the tricolour flag, surrounded by his family." "That's easily managed" said his neighbour, "give me five francs and he'll come." "Done," said the Englishman. Immediately a voice chants the couplet of "la Parisienne,"

> "Soldat du drapeau tricolour,
> D'Orléans, toi qui l'as porté," &c.

and the song continues without intermission until the king, surrounded by his children and holding the tricolour flag, has appeared to thank the crowd. Thereupon the noise diminishes: but the complacent bystander

whispers to the Englishman: "Now, would you like me to make him sing? It is a little more difficult; you will give me ten francs." "Very good," said the Englishman. Immediately a cry is raised: "Long live the king! Long live the Charter! The Marseillaise!" So persistent is the shouting that at the end of twenty minutes Louis Philippe appears again. The crowd breaks into the Marseillaise; the king was about to retire from the balcony; he stops, amid shouts of applause, and sings with the people, beating time with his foot. The tale goes on that the officious showman of the king turned to the Englishman again with the proposal: "Now will you give me 100 francs? he will dance!" But the Englishman had had enough.

The story, no doubt, is apocryphal, but it indicates a truth; with it may be compared the account by Saint-Simon of the levée of the ancient kings:—"At 8 o'clock the chief valet de chambre on duty . . . awoke the king. The chief physician, the chief surgeon, and the nurse . . entered at the same time. The latter kissed the king; the others rubbed and often changed his shirt. At the quarter, the grand chamberlain was called . . and those who had what was called the grandes entrées. The chamberlain . . drew back the curtains, which had been closed again, and presented the holy water from the vase, at the head of the bed . . . He who had opened the curtains and presented the holy water, presented also a prayer-book. Then all passed into the cabinet of the Council. A very short religious

service being over, the king called, they re-entered. The same officer gave him his dressing-gown; immediately after, other privileged courtiers entered, and then everybody, in time to find the king putting on his shoes and stockings . . . Every other day we saw him shave himself. As soon as he was dressed, he prayed to God, at the side of his bed, when all the clergy present knelt, the cardinals without cushions and all the laity remaining standing; and the captain of the guards came to the balustrade during the prayer after which the king passed into his cabinet." Ichabod, ichabod! The veil of the monarchy was rent, its holy of holies exposed; the people had peeped and seen, instead of a mystery, a gentleman in plain clothes, with an umbrella under his arm, and a head shaped like a pear!

§ 2. The Two Theories of the Monarchy.

There was no fear, then, that Louis Philippe would claim divine right, or venture, on that hypothesis, to abrogate the Constitution. Whatever his title may have been, at least it was not legitimacy; that chain was broken, and with it all that bound the king to mediæval institutions; he no longer rested on the past; what then was his basis and what his guarantee? The circumstances which had raised him to the throne were, briefly, as follows:—A group of deputies had appointed him the lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and this appointment had been confirmed by Lafayette

and the people at the Hôtel de Ville; after the abdication of Charles, the Chambers which he had summoned, and which were sitting at the time in only half their numerical strength, had converted the lieutenant-general into the new king, and had defined, in the Charter as revised, the conditions which he swore to observe. What interpretation, now, was to be put upon this appointment? There were two answers to this question corresponding to two parties. According to the one view, the basis of the new system was a kind of tacit contract between the king and the nation; in this contract each of the parties represented an element of the sovereignty, neither therefore could dispense with the sanction and support of the other; they were equipollent parts of an indivisible whole, and the prerogatives of each were limited and guaranteed by those of the other; neither the sovereignty of the people was admitted, nor the divine right of kings; there were two distinct titles, and each was bounded by each; and the total and unquestionable result was the constitutional monarchy.

According to the other view the king was the elected of the people; the people, therefore, were sovereign; the chief they had once appointed they might as readily dismiss, and make of the monarchy no more than a transitional stage to the Republic. This, at least, is the conclusion which was implied in the theory of election; and Hugo, at a later date, gave it vigorous expression in "Les Misérables." "1830," he says, "is a revolution stopped half-way.

Half-progress, quasi right. Now logic ignores the 'almost,' as the sun ignores a candle." The monarchy is "a halt, a reparation of forces," and "a halt implies the battle of yesterday and the battle of to-morrow."

§ 3. The Policy of the Reign.

To these two views correspond two policies: the first may be called the policy of the reign; its object was to minimise the importance of the events of 1830, declaring that there had been no Revolution, but only a change in the head of the State, a change which had dissociated the monarchy from the reaction, but not otherwise modified the Government: this policy was opposed to democratic extension, and was named for that reason the "policy of resistance;" its chief representative and defender, in theory and practice, was Guizot, and it is from him that we extract the following account of it:—"This policy," he says, "was really both liberal and anti-revolutionary. Anti-revolutionary, abroad and at home, for it aimed, abroad, at the maintenance of European peace, within at that of the constitutional monarchy; liberal, for it accepted and respected fully the essential conditions of free government, the decisive intervention of the country in its own affairs, the constant and vital discussion, by the public as well as in the Chambers, of the ideas and acts of those in authority." Two convictions are indicated here which are closely connected with one another; that of the danger of revolution,

and that of the sufficiency of the existing liberties. The monarchy in its earlier years was at constant war with conspiracy and revolt, and it was in the midst of these conditions that the policy of resistance defined itself; "the spirit of revolution," said Guizot, "is not an accidental and passing guest . . . . it is a malady prolonged and tedious, to a certain extent even permanent, and against it the Government is bound to wage a perpetual war." To those who held this conviction, every extension of liberty appeared to be a concession to anarchy; to lower the qualifications for the franchise, to diminish the political influence of officials, was to endanger the unity and force, if not the existence of the Government; reform, as an ultimate possibility, Guizot did not reject, on the contrary he regarded it as a necessary development of the representative system; but any immediate step he conceived to be inopportune and dangerous, and the more so that every essential of liberty was already secured; the censure of the press was abolished, and its offences submitted to trial by jury; by the law of 1831 the number of electors had been increased from 100,000 to 200,000; and these provisions were sufficient guarantee of the reality of popular control: the intelligent opinion of the country could make itself heard and felt; and the need for immediate measures of reform was as imaginary as their danger was real.

§ 4. The Party of Movement.

Such was the policy of resistance, as defined by its ablest exponent; its ideal was order in the interest of liberty, stability in the interest of progress, and government by a class in the interest of the people: this ideal has only to be stated to suggest the opposition it was bound to encounter: against the party of resistance was set a party of movement, including various sections and various shades of opinion from constitutional Liberals to Republicans and Socialists. Of those who had gathered about Lafayette at the Hôtel de Ville, many had only reluctantly agreed to the appointment of the Duc d'Orléans; all had given a wider sense than the king was prepared to admit to the catch-word of the moment "a throne surrounded by republican institutions:" it followed that even among those who were sincerely attached to the throne there were many who were bitterly opposed to what became its accepted policy; while a yet extremer section rejected the monarchy itself, and openly, by their words and acts, proclaimed themselves Republicans.

The constitutional opposition assumed various forms; but there were three main points upon which they directed their attack—the personal predominance of the king, the political influence of officials, and the limitation of the franchise.

§ 5. The Position of the King.

During the Restoration, as has been already noticed, the king had reserved to himself considerable powers; it was he who had granted the Constitution; it was he who initiated legislation; it was he who, in the opinion even of Liberals was the real head of the State; the Chamber of Deputies did not represent the right of the people to take part in the government, it represented the will of the king to consult the opinion of his subjects; the Ministers were not regarded as delegates of the majority, in theory, at least, they were officers of the king, charged with the execution of his personal policy: "on that day," said Royer-Collard, "when it shall be established that in fact the Chamber can reject the Ministers of the king and impose on him others, who shall be *its* ministers and not those of the king, on that day all is over, not only with the Charter, but with all monarchy:" "it is the king who wills and acts," wrote Guizot, "the Ministers are charged with the execution of his will." This theory had been applied by Charles X., when he appointed Polignac in the face of a hostile majority; and the result had been a Revolution: it is therefore not surprising that supporters of the new *régime* should endeavour to impose on the king the opposite principle, that the Ministers are the creation of the majority, and the Crown a passive symbol of the continuity and force of the State, irresponsible, without

a policy, and therefore at once too high and too unimportant to attack. "The king reigns but does not govern," was the maxim of a considerable party; but it was a maxim that the king himself refused to adopt: he had been deprived by the amended Charter of the monopoly of initiating legislation; but he clung only the more closely to the power which he still possessed: like Napoleon, he did not choose to be a "*pourceau à l'engrais;*" he was determined to be head of the State not only in name, but in fact, and in spite of opposition was able, on the whole, to carry his point: "they may do what they like," he said, "they shall not prevent me from driving my own carriage. A Ministry is a posting relay. Sometimes I have good horses and the journey is easy; then I come to a station where I am obliged to take frisky and restive animals; one must get along somehow, and after all it is only a relay." He thus made himself responsible for the policy of the reign: that policy, as we have seen, was resistance at home, and non-intervention abroad; on both sides it provoked a furious opposition, and the opposition glanced from the Ministers to the king; the fiction of the Constitution was shattered, and the monarchy itself exposed; the condition of reform began to appear to be no longer a change of Ministry, but a change in the form of government, and instead of a constitutional crisis there loomed on the horizon of possibilities a Revolution: the danger was felt most keenly by those who were most devoted to the Monarchy; and in 1838 and

1839 even Guizot and the doctrinaires joined with the Left in a campaign against the personal predominance of the king.

§ 6. Parliamentary Reform.

But whatever part the king may have played in the maintenance of the policy of the reign, it is plain that the support of a majority in the Chamber was essential to his success: the means whereby that majority was maintained was another grievance of the opposition: an extract from "La Presse" of March 1840, may serve to illustrate the point; the writer is indicating the means by which Thiers was supposed to be securing his majority:—

"Every evening account is taken of the acquisitions of the day.—Shall we have so and so?—I answer for him, if you will give his son-in-law such and such a post.—And so and so, if one gave him this, that or the other?—It's not worth the trouble, we shall have him for nothing; I have seen his mother-in-law.—Ah! if we could have ——!—It's not so difficult as you think; he has just lost 50,000; his affairs are much embarrassed.—But our most magnificent conquest is the excellent ——. What did you do to secure him? —I caught him by his feelings.—I don't understand. —Ah! you have no children. The good man has two marriageable daughters. I am pretty well up in my parliamentary statistics. I know those who have daughters to establish, those who have sons to place,

those who have incapable brothers on their hands, those who have affairs of the heart in the royal theatres, those who have secrets to hide, those who have manufactures to support, those who have iron-works, those who have sugar, those who have money in the funds, and lastly, those who have debts!"

This is a review, if not of the facts, of a section of opinion on the facts; but apart from vague accusations the Government possessed, as we have seen, in the centralised system of administration, a powerful means of influence in the country and the Chamber: the number of officials who were also deputies was constantly increasing; in 1830, it was 142, of whom 72 belonged to the majority; in 1847 it was 193, of whom 160 belonged to the majority; while the total number of deputies was only 450. There was clearly a tendency for the officials to make advancement a condition of their vote, and for the Government to make the vote a condition of advancement: but this was not all; under the existing system every local interest depended on the central authorities, and it was local interests that determined the votes of electors; a commune wanted a grant for the repair of its church or school, an individual wanted a scholarship for his son, or a decoration for himself, and these advantages could only be obtained directly through the Government; it was on condition of demanding them, therefore, that a deputy was returned to the Chamber, and on condition of obtaining them that he gave his vote to the Ministry; there

was thus a tendency to subordinate general to local interests, and to secure a fictitious majority by appeals to the cupidity of electors and deputies. According to the Opposition the evil was real and serious:— "with a few exceptions," said Lamennais in 1841, "where is the deputy who thinks of anything but making and repairing his fortune, and selling the electors who, in turn, have sold the country to him? What is the Chamber? A great bazaar, where every one barters his conscience, or what passes for his conscience, in exchange for a place or an office?" To the Government such an accusation was merely the rhetoric of party enthusiasm; and they rejected all proposals to neutralise the influence of officials. Parliamentary reform took its place by the side of electoral reform in the programme of the Opposition; and it was the constant refusal of the Government to consider either proposition that was a proximate cause of the Revolution of 1848.

§ 7. The Decentralisation.

The question of parliamentary reform was connected as we have seen, with the whole administrative system. It had already become clear, under the Restoration, that the centralisation established by a despotic government was difficult to harmonise with representative liberty; the system had been established on the hypothesis that the nation was incapable of self-government, and was incompatible with a

theory that asserted or implied the contrary: already in 1818, under the ministry of Martignac, a project had been introduced to subject to election the municipal and departmental councils; the project failed to satisfy either the Left or the Right, and was withdrawn in the face of their combined opposition; but the object at which it had aimed was attained by the laws of 1831 and 1835. Henceforth, the members of the administrative councils were appointed by a special body of electors, composed of the richer inhabitants and others who "offered guarantees of aptitude"; but the powers of the councils so elected were as limited as the franchise on which they depended: as defined by the laws of 1837 and 1838 they fell into three classes, (1) decisions that were finally valid unless vetoed by the prefect within a given time, (2) decisions that were valid only when confirmed by the prefect or the Minister of the Interior, (3) advices and recommendations which might or might not be adopted by the prefect: there was thus a constant supervision or "tutelage" of the lower by the higher authorities; and so minute and effective was this control as to stultify in practice the local powers theoretically possessed by the councils. A single example will help to explain the working of the system: a certain commune wanted to build a municipal slaughter-house; to this end it was necessary to raise a loan, to create a tariff, and to secure a site by expropriation in a forest belonging to the Crown: in 1846 a project was submitted to the Minister of the

Interior; in 1848 it was returned, not approved, on the ground that the conditions of the proposed loan were too onerous to be accepted; in 1850, after the Revolution, the same project was submitted again; this time it was approved by the Minister on condition that the tariff proposed be reduced, but it had still to be sent before the Council of State, who objected both to the rate of the tariff and to the size of the building; and it was not till 1858 that the authorisation was finally granted: meantime, the Commune had been in treaty with the "administration of the civil list" as to the terms of the expropriation, the position of the site, the direction of the road that was to approach it, and the right of inspection by the forest authorities; and it was not till 1859, thirteen years after the first application, that the building was actually erected. This is an exceptional case, but it may serve to illustrate at once the drawbacks and the benefits of centralisation; against the waste and delay of the long official procedure must be set the advantage of a higher control over a body resembling, it may be supposed, our "parish councils" of the future, and deliberating about the site of an unsanitary building and the rate of a public tax.

Over the departmental councils, composed of men of education and experience, there was less need of supervision, and by the law of 1871 they have been, to a great extent, relieved of it; but under the monarchy of July they too were severely subject to control, and though an extension of their powers was

not actually part of the Liberal programme, it was part of the tendency to which Liberals were attached. The argumentative campaign on the subject had already been opened under the Restoration; the advocates of reform had opposed to a possible loss of administrative efficiency what they regarded as the certain gain of a more general experience in public business; the conduct of local affairs, they maintained, would prepare for the conduct of those of the nation, and vague aspirations after liberty find vent in application to tangible details; ignorant and factious criticism would be checked by a practical acquaintance with the difficulties of administration, and the Government itself be made more secure by a process of decentralisation, which would divert to responsible local bodies the opposition which was concentrated at present on the centre. These arguments bore their fruit after the Revolution of 1848; the reorganisation of the administrative councils was taken in hand by the Republican Assembly, but before any measure had been passed, intervened the *coup d'état*, and it was not till 1871 that a radical reform was effected.

§ 8. Electoral Reform.

The question of centralisation came up in connection with the votes of officials, and the demand for parliamentary reform was associated with that for the extension of the franchise. Republicans, Socialists and Legitimists combined in the cry for

universal suffrage; but the practical proposal actually made by the Constitutional Left did not go beyond what was called the "adjunction of the capacities," that is to say, the extension of the vote to certain categories of citizens, selected with a view to their presumed education and intelligence. Even this proposal, however, was constantly rejected by the Government; Guizot regarded it as premature, the king as dangerous; once started on the slope, he felt, there was no possibility of stopping; and to admit the smallest extension was to admit, in principle, the Republic. Against this fixed resolve the Opposition beat in vain; till even the Liberals who adhered to the Monarchy were driven to appeal from the Chamber to the country, and to inaugurate, against their will, the Revolution of 1848.

§ 9. The Supremacy of the Middle Class.

Such, then, were the points at issue between the Government and the Constitutional Opposition; but underlying them all was a difference not only of policy but of sentiment. The government of July was essentially undramatic; it had no brilliance, no dash, no pose: the nation was enamoured of victories, surprises, appeals to the heart, millennial vistas; but all this found no place in the policy of the reign: instead of liberty it offered order, instead of glory, prosperity; the passion of loyalty was dead, the tumult of democracy suppressed; nations in rebellion called in vain

to the ancient champion of freedom; Italy succumbed, Warsaw fell, and France did not stir a hand: what then, was the Government doing? what did it represent? neither nobles nor people, neither honour nor liberty, but only, as it seemed, the financial interests of the upper middle class. "Who does not recall," wrote Duvergier de Hauranne, "the tempests unchained by sesame on the most pacific benches of the Chamber, and the agitated, tumultuous, almost revolutionary appearance of the 'salle des pas-perdus' on the day that saw the great fight of beetroots and colonial sugar? Who can have forgotten the burst of patriotic enthusiasm evoked from the galleries by the branch-line to F . . . .? These are the triumphs and defeats, the joys and griefs of our time; these are the causes that have taken the place of those for which our fathers shed their blood on the scaffold, or the field of battle!" Such an attitude was repugnant to the French imagination; vulgar commercialism, contempt for ideas, indifference to national and universal ends, that is what was understood by the reign of the bourgeoisie: the "great nation" was tied and bound by a plutocratic class: differences of opinion, of policy, of principle, were embittered by the sense of humiliation and contempt, and once more it is a friend of the monarchy, who sounds to his ancient allies a solemn note of warning:—"if the dominant class should employ their power merely as a means to their own prosperity, if the taste for material pleasure should absorb them

exclusively, and render them insensible to national greatness, to the progress of liberty, to the needs of the classes who have no political rights; if, in a word, it could be said of them, with some appearance of reason, that they imitate those they have overthrown, and that there exist in France on the one hand 200,000 families who command and enjoy, and on the other eight million families who obey and suffer: if this be so, is it credible that such a system is solidly based; and is it possible that it should be long maintained?"

§ 10. The Republican Opposition.

Hitherto we have considered only the Constitutional Opposition; but there existed also from the first the elements of a Republican party. The extreme section of the adherents of Lafayette at the Hôtel de Ville accepted the monarchy for the moment only to interpret it as a democracy; they demanded the abolition of the hereditary peerage and the assimilation of the Upper to the Lower Chamber, a franchise all but universal, popular election of the whole administrative and judicial staff, and complete liberty of worship, education and the press; and these demands were to be submitted to the nation as the ultimate constituent authority. The policy thus laid down was monarchic only in name; it must have led, if adopted, straight to the Republic, and, in fact, its rejection by the Government gave rise to a Republican Opposition.

The new party, insignificant at first, increased in strength and numbers as the policy of the reign defined itself; it had its representatives in the Chamber and the Press, and its propaganda by secret societies: the republican *Société des amis du peuple* organised the insurrection of 1832; the *Société des droits de l'homme* was responsible for that of 1834; and the abortive attempt of 1839 was inspired by the *Société des Saisons:* more than once the king's life was attempted by irresponsible members of the party, and the attitude of the would-be regicides may be gauged from their own lips:—"Your name?—Conspirator!—Your profession?—Exterminator of tyrants!—Do you repent?—I repent only that I did not succeed!"

§ 11. Revolutionary Idealism.

This Republican opposition was inspired not only by the causes we have already discussed, and which suggested to more ardent and active spirits a recourse to revolution in default of reform, but also by a recrudescence of the democratic idealism of 1793. The rehabilitation of the First Republic had been already prepared by Thiers and Mignet, and now Lamartine, Michelet and Blanc, took up and completed the work; the atrocities of the Terror, while they were not approved, were attributed to fate, rather than to crime; the Revolution was credited with all its virtues, while its vices were accounted to its opponents; it was conceived as a modern Hercules Furens, whose

Nessus shirt was woven of aristocrats and kings, and whose apotheosis awaited consummation in the heart of a regenerate humanity: "we are proud," said Lamartine, at the close of his History, "to belong to a race which has been permitted by Providence to conceive such thoughts, and to be the offspring of an age which has impressed such a movement of ideas on the human mind. Glory to France for her intelligence, her destiny, her soul, her blood!" many were the victims of the struggle; but "a nation need not regret her blood when it has flowed for the blossoming of eternal truths. God has set a price on the budding and unfolding of His designs for mankind. Ideas spring from human blood. Revolutions descend from the scaffold. The divinity of every religion is attested by its martyrs," and over each martyr may be written "dead for the cause of the future, and labourer in the field of humanity."

§ 12. The People as Humanity.

"Humanity" was the creed of the Republicans; it is thus defined by Leroux: "humanity is an ideal being composed of a multitude of real beings, who are themselves humanity in the germ, humanity in the virtual condition." To this metaphysical formula corresponds a movement of sentiment; it was the tendency of the time to insist on the unity underlying the distinctions of society, and on the bond of affection by which that unity was, or should be, expressed,

Such a conception of the general brotherhood of man does not necessarily involve a Republican theory of the State, for there is no *à priori* reason why fraternity should not flourish under a King; but there was a natural tendency to forget, in the unity of mankind, the diversity of men, and to suppose that because we are "virtually" brothers we are therefore actually "equal": this is in fact the conclusion of Pierre Leroux and of other thinkers of the time:—"every man, every woman," he says, "is equivalent to every other; there is no reason for any distinction between them:" "equality is a principle, a dogma . . . . it is the criterion of justice . . . . society has no other bond. But equality involves, to begin with, equal political rights; and so the transition is made from fraternity to the republic.

"Humanity," then, may be further defined as a fraternal association of equal individuals: from such an association privilege is *ex hypothesi* excluded; and from this it may be made to follow, with a certain appearance of plausibility, that the "classes" are excluded from humanity, which is thus identified with the "people:" by this identification, the "people" in the sense of the "masses" (that is to say, of a class), are credited with all the virtues of the ideal association of mankind; and a "Republic" comes to mean at once the realisation of universal fraternity, and the political predominance of the heterogeneous class at the moment excluded from the franchise: this confusion of 'populus" with "plebs," and of the ideal of the future

with the actual present, is curiously illustrated by the following passage from Michelet's "History of the Revolution;" he is speaking, ostensibly, of *tout le monde*, that is to say, of every one in general and no one in particular; but it is plain from his words that he has in his mind the mass of men as opposed to a minority of genius or culture:—"Ignorant no doubt of natural phenomena, he (*tout le monde*) is none the less a just judge in all that concerns mankind. He is sovereign master by right. When he sits in his natural prætorium and judgment seat, in the square of a great city, or on the bench at the church-door, or else on a stone at the cross-roads, under the judgment-elm, he judges there without appeal; there is no gainsaying his sentence. Kings, queens and tribunes, Mirabeaus, Robespierres, appear humbly at his bar. The great Napoleon himself holds his hat in his hand, as Luther had done before him. . . . . He judges, all is over; for you, historians, philosophers, critics, cavillers, to seek and find the 'why.' Seek; he is always just; and the injustice you discover, feeble and subtle that you are, is the defect of your own intelligence."

It is plain that the "people" are here conceived at once as a class and as humanity; and it is this conception that lies at the root of the Republican idealism of the time: as a class, they are the poor opposed to the rich, the simple opposed to the sophistical, the intuitions of instinct opposed to the inductions of a spurious culture: as humanity, they are society itself; there is nothing but they, and they are all brothers;

their passions are divinely inspired, their judgments infallible; and bound by a bond of spontaneous love they are waiting only their arrival to power to realise at once upon earth the heaven of the communion of saints.

It is thus that the "enthusiasm of humanity" was brought to the support of the Republican party, and a particular policy in the present deduced from the remote conception of an ideal society. There is no better illustration of this attitude than the later writings of Lamennais: we have already come across him as the champion of Pope and King; we find him now as the champion of the sovereignty of the people: the foundation of his later preaching is the brotherhood of man:—"You are sons of the same father, and the same mother has given you milk; why then do you not love one another as brothers, and why do you rather treat one another as enemies?" "Say not of such and such an one, he is of one people, and I of another people. For all people have had on earth the same father, who is Adam, and have in heaven the same father, who is God." From this humanitarian idealism he deduces political conclusions; the authority he had formerly derived from God he bases now on the people, and turns his kings by right divine into usurpers of the popular sovereignty:—"it is the people who make kings, and kings are made for their peoples, and peoples are not made for their kings:" "they tell you of the sovereign, of the prince, of the public powers; they do but abuse you with words. I

have told you already, the sovereign is yourselves, is the people essentially free. It is from the people that the Government is derived, be it a Government by one or by many. The Government is a simple executor of the law, or of the will of the people, and has no other functions. It is chosen and delegated for that sole object, not to command but to obey; and if it ceases to obey the people, the people deposes it as an unfaithful delegacy. That is all."

A theory of democracy so absolute as this is implicitly an attack on the existing *régime;* and Lamennais does not shrink from making the consequence explicit:—"wherever," he says," by a reversion of the natural basis of equality, certain privileged classes are invested with the monopoly of legislative authority, there is disorder and tyranny;" and he proceeds to adopt the complete Republican programme, universal suffrage, right of association and public meeting, liberty of education, and the enfranchisement of the administrative councils: the gospel of fraternity assumes the garb of political propaganda, and its apostle appears as a socialist pamphleteer:—"You say: I am cold; and to warm your wasted limbs they bind them with triple chains of iron. You say: I hunger; and they reply: eat the crumbs that fall from the tables where we feast. You say: I thirst; and they reply: Drink your tears. The bee has its hive for a resting-place, but you have no shelter for your head; the mite has its raiment of silk to protect it against the cold, but your limbs are bare; the

meanest worm finds shelter and food on the plant where it was born; but you are in want of both."

§ 13. The People as They Were.

The appeals of the Republican idealists were addressed to the people as "humanity"; what they actually reached was the people as a class: they passed through various gradations, and arrived in a profoundly modified form; the "fraternity" was decomposed into fanaticism and hate, and the faith in the universal association of mankind precipitated as rage against society as it was; what began as an enthusiasm of humanity ended in conspiracy and revolt; and the deification of the mass of men by a Michelet or a Leroux found its effective application in such appeals as the following: "when the people strikes it is neither timid nor generous, for it does not strike for its own ends but for those of eternal truth, and it knows well that there is no one who has the right to pardon in its name." "Immolate all the foes of equality and liberty! it is but bare justice to strike the oppressors of humanity; when that is done you will rest in your greatness and your force. . . . . Meantime, no pity! Bare your arms and plunge them to the shoulders in the entrails of your butchers."

These extracts are characteristic; they give us a glimpse of the "people" as it actually was, a suffering and indignant class, subject to the uncertainty

and privation of an imperfect economic system, without education, without a plan of practical and positive reform, but looking to insurrection as the remedy for a distress whose causes were not political but economic. It is this class view of the people that is emphasised by Louis Blanc; his "History of Ten Years" (1830–1840) is an indictment of the bourgeoisie; raised to power by the Revolution of July they had exploited the Government in their own interest; monopolists of capital and land, as well as of political power, they held at their disposal the labour and the life of the proletariat; while the latter, "too ignorant even to desire their part in the Government, groaned under the yoke of a social order where for them is nothing but oppression—where children of seven years old work twelve hours a day for their living, girls of sixteen are driven to prostitution, vagabonds seek a bed on the steps of palaces, poverty produces infanticide, artisans are thrown on the streets to starve by the invention of a machine, and thousands of labourers rise at dawn, pale in face and bitter at heart, and march to battle with the cry on their lips, 'Let us live working or die fighting'!"

This passage opens the whole question of the economic organisation of society; and it is to this, and to the various proposals of reform, that we must now address our attention.

§ 14. Free Competition.

One of the acts of the Revolution of 1789 had been to abolish the trade corporations: these bodies represented an economic organisation which had prevailed throughout Europe for many centuries; it was their function to limit the number of labourers or of masters in a trade, to secure good and uniform work, and to value it at a fair price. In France, the Government, following out its constant tendency to centralisation, had superimposed regulations of its own upon those of the old guilds; and so numerous and minute did these restrictions become that it is said that by the middle of the eighteenth century "the smallest manufacturer would have needed to be a consummate lawyer not to lose himself in the multiplicity of rules to which he was subject." The Revolution, in accordance with its policy of destructive liberty, abolished these restrictions and with them the trade guilds; any one henceforth might engage in any occupation, and sell his products or his labour at any price he chose or could: but this was not enough; not only were the old corporations destroyed, but the formation of new ones was forbidden; by a law of June 1791 all combinations of masters or men were prohibited, and this law was afterwards embodied in the Code Civil. The revolution thus effected in the organisation of trade was contemporaneous with the transition from the old to the new industry;

machine work in factories was superseding manual work at home; by the removal of legal restrictions the number of apprentices increased indefinitely, and the rate of wages was lowered in proportion; women and children were employed and men thrown out of work; commercial crises became severe and frequent; strikes, accompanied by violence, were common, in spite of the law: in commerce, as in government, liberty had led to anarchy:—"strife of producers among themselves for the conquest of the market, of labourers among themselves for the conquest of employment, of the manufacturer against the workman to determine the rate of wages, of the poor man against the machine that is destined to destroy him by starvation, such," says Louis Blanc, "under the name of competition, were the characteristics of the situation."

An occurrence at Lyons in 1831 was a striking commentary on this text; the chief product of the city was silk, and its price had been so reduced by foreign competition that wages had sunk to starvation point, 18 sous for a day of 18 hours; the men demanded a fixed tariff; one was proposed by the Conseil de Prud'hommes, and publicly approved by the Prefect; but the Government disavowed the action of their subordinate: the labourers then decided on a monster demonstration, came into contact with the National Guard and the troops, and after two days fighting found themselves masters of the town: the victory, of course, was temporary; but

the significance of the situation lay in the fact that a question of wages had led to civil war, and that a body of militant workmen had adopted the desperate device 'vivre en travaillant, ou mourir en combattant.'"

This single example may serve as an extreme illustration of the general position; production had been set free, but at the cost of the producers; the new forces were immense, but they were beyond the control of their creators: the problem therefore remained, to organise industry and trade in the interests of the whole society; and it was the attempt to meet this problem that gave birth to Socialism.

§ 15. Babœuf.

Socialism was a product of the first Revolution, though the word was not invented till later: the various measures adopted by the Convention to transfer the property of the rich to the poor have been already referred to; these, however, were not properly socialistic, for they admitted private property, proposing only to transfer it from one individual to another; Socialism proper was first introduced into practical politics by Babœuf (1764–1796).

Babœuf proposed to transfer to the State the possession and administration of all property, and to regulate by public officials, in accordance with the state of the market, the particular kind of production which each individual was to undertake; to simplify

the problem, he would have prohibited foreign trade; the country was to produce its own necessities in exactly such proportion as they were required, and what that proportion was, was to be determined by the State, which was also to regulate the lodging, dress, and meals of all its citizens: this ingenious system was to be introduced by a revolution (1795); the first step was the massacre of the Directors, of the Ministers, of the General of the Interior and his Staff, and the expulsion of the Legislative Chambers; this was to be followed by the repudiation of public and private debts, and the abolition of the right of testament: thus remodelled and purged the State would commence its beneficent career; it would find itself at once in possession of the existing national property, of that of "the enemies of the Revolution," which was already forfeited to the poor, and of all estates which might prove to have been "usurped" or "neglected;" private citizens would be invited to add their possessions to this store; those who refused would be subjected to a double and progressive taxation; and any one who might be convicted of "idleness, luxury, or want of patriotism" would forfeit his goods to the community: in this way it would not be long before the State had become the universal proprietor.

Such is the outline of the scheme of Babœuf; it was communism introduced by confiscation and maintained by despotism; it contained no real solution, for it had not even analysed the problem; all

that it did was to prepare a political revolution, in order to create a State to which the problem might be referred. The conspiracy was detected, and Babœuf condemned and executed. Both he and his scheme were exceptional phenomena, the product of an exceptional time, and the later developments of socialistic thought had an independent origin and growth: two of the most important of these belong to the period of the Monarchy of July; they are those of St. Simon and Fourier.

§ 16. St. Simon.

St. Simon was born in 1760 and died in 1825; he enjoyed from an early age the conviction of his own greatness, for his valet had orders to wake him with the words "souvenez-vous, M. le Comte, que vous avez de grandes choses à faire;" in 1779 he was a volunteer in the American war; after the peace he developed an enthusiasm for public works, and we find him recommending to the viceroy of Mexico the junction of the two oceans, and, later, concerned with the project of a canal to connect Madrid with the sea; in the Revolution he played no public part, but engaged in financial speculations, in which he ruined himself, and for which he was sent to prison; he was released at the fall of Robespierre, married in 1801, and was divorced within the year. He had a definite theory of life, which he expressed in the following rules:—

(1) To lead during all the prime of life an existence as original and active as possible.

(2) To make a careful study of every theory and every practice.

(3) To traverse every class of society, to place oneself in the most diverse social positions, and even to create relations which have never yet existed.

(4) Finally, to employ the close of life in summing up the conclusions attained.

In accordance with these rules, he threw himself into life; he made trial of everything, books, conversation, play, wine and women; and reappeared in 1808, a copyist at the Mont de Piété on £40 a year; there he was discovered and relieved by his quondam valet, till in 1814 he secured a pension from his family; in 1823 he made an attempt at suicide, and in 1825 he died. He had written numerous books, of which the most important was the "Nouveau Christianisme," and he left behind him disciples to carry on his work. One of these, Olindes-Rodrigues, recruited Bazard and Enfantin, the future leaders of the sect, and at the moment of the master's death, began the propaganda of his ideas: it was carried on through the press and by means of public lectures, and from 1830 to 1832 was the most prominent intellectual movement in France.

The system was based on a broad generalisation from history: society, it was maintained, proceeds from organic to critical, and from critical to organic epochs; the critical epoch destroys the organic, and

the organic concludes the critical: in the history of the world there have been two organic and two critical epochs; the former are the pre-Socratic age and the age of mediæval Christianity, the latter, the period between Socrates and Christ, and the period from the Reformation onwards: the Revolution of 1789 was the crisis of the last critical epoch, and heralded an age of reconstruction; of that new age the prophet and founder was St. Simon. This law of human progress was regarded as a mattter of faith; it was not merely a hypothesis, arrived at by induction from data, it was an intuition of genius, suggested and confirmed by facts, but not dependent upon them for its validity; this is stated by Bazard in the most emphatic language:—"ah! do not fear to confess it, this *faith!* say boldly that you *believe* in your love for your kind, and in their love for you; say that you *believe* in the progressive will of humanity; say that you *believe* that the world in which this will is exercised is favourable, by its nature, to its developments; say that you *believe* that a bond of love unites in a close and indissoluble tie man and that which is not man, and that these two parts of a single whole, advancing together towards a common destiny, mutually assist one another with their love, their wisdom, and their endeavours. This *law* then that you have learnt to express, this law that the philosopher did not create and cannot even justify except by his *faith* in it, this hypothesis of order which *genius conceives*, and which serves as a *basis to science*;

this invisible law which governs man and the world; this powerful will which impels them unceasingly towards a better future, name it without fear: it is the will of God." This passage is characteristic; it illustrates the claim of the St. Simonians to be not only philosophers but prophets; their appeal is to the heart as much as to the head, and is based on a faith in love and in God: God is defined as "all that is; all is in him, all is by him;" and his expression is the tendency of the world to its consummation in a perfect society: of that society, or at least of the next stage towards it, the general formula would be the balance of body and soul: Paganism had given the preponderance to the one, Christianity to the other; the epoch introduced by St. Simon was to reconcile and harmonise the two; as in the individual, so in society, matter and spirit were complements each to each; and the new organisation must embrace and co-ordinate both elements: that organisation was sketched by the St. Simonians as follows.

Men were divided into three classes, Priests (or Artists), "Savants" and "Industriels:" the function of the first was to appeal to the imagination in the interest of religion, or, more precisely, in the interest of those general ideas which were the basis and the bond of the whole society; all their words and works were to be a symbol or exposition of the accepted social ideal: "we designate by the name of priest the man who, by his thoughts and acts, by the morality of his whole life, inspires generous sentiments and awakens

sympathies. He is the organiser of others and the bond of union between them; he is essentially the *religious* man, for it is on him that they *rely;* he is priest according to the order of St. Simon." Those whom the Priest is to harmonise and inspire, are the two subordinate classes, the "Savants" and "Industriels:" science, henceforth, is to work in the interest of industry, and industry to develop under the direction of science; action is incomplete without thought and thought without action, and it is the function of the Priest to consolidate their union: the Savants, then, must be defined not merely as men of science, but as men of science in touch with practical tendencies and needs; their organisation, like that of the whole society, will be threefold; on the one hand will be the men of research—the "Perfectionnants," on the other the teaching staff—the "Enseignants;" and above these two groups, to co-ordinate and inspire their labours, will be placed a group of philosophers impressed with the conception of society as a whole, intent on the general direction and aim of all knowledge, and synthesising to a common end the diversity of its special branches: thus the student and the teacher would be kept in touch with one another, and both of them with the general movement of the whole society; and to the anarchy of science and education, and the isolation of their departments, would succeed an organic creation, harmonised within itself, and nicely adjusted to the environment upon which it was to direct its action.

The complement of science was industry, and the "Industriels" like the "Savants" must be brought under the direction of the Priests: even more patent than the anarchy of science was the anarchy of trade; the results were more disastrous, and the need of a remedy more pressing: it was, in fact, the primary aim of the St. Simonians to "ameliorate as quickly and completely as possible the moral and physical existence of the most numerous class"; this they regarded as the modern reading of the precept, "love thy neighbour as thyself:" their remedy was a form of Socialism: the State was to own the means of production, and organise industry, on the principle indicated by the motto, "to each according to his capacity and to each capacity according to its works": the "Industriels" were to be divided into communities, each directed by a mayor, and all grouped together under a central authority; the production of each community, and of each department of industry, would be regulated by statistical information as to the probable needs of consumers, and the distribution would be regulated by the services of each producer; there would be promotion for merit and pensions for old age, and this, it was thought, would be sufficient to provide a motive to work.

Such, in general outline, was the St. Simonian system: a single abortive attempt was made to put it into practice; Enfantin established a "family" on an estate at Menilmontant; there were some forty members who engaged in manual work in the garden,

cheered by the singing of hymns and readings from the lives of the saints; they wore a special dress, whose significance is thus described: "the waistcoat is the symbol of fraternity; we cannot put it on without the help of one of our brethren. If it is attended, on the one hand, by thei nconvenience of making assistance indispensable, on the other it has the great advantage of bringing forcibly before our minds, on each occasion, the sentiment of association." In August 1832 the society was brought to trial as illegal and immoral; the result was its dissolution and the imprisonment of Enfantin for a year; and after this event the movement languished and died.

The scheme of the St. Simonians, like that of Babœuf, contributed not so much a solution of the problem as a direction to the State to solve it; but it was more fruitful in the suggestion of possible and pacific measures of transition: of these the chief was the gradual absorption of inheritance by the State, first by a limitation of collateral succession, secondly by a progressive increase of death duties: in these and in other ways it was hoped that the conversion of private to public property might be effected without disturbance; but as the St. Simonians never formed a compact political party they were never able to press their proposals upon the country; their scheme remained a suggestion, but a faithful and interesting one, and one that has influenced, indirectly, the tendency of modern thought.

§ 17. Fourier.

From St. Simon and his followers we pass to Fourier. His system is based on a fantastic and elaborate cosmology: the law of the world is universal attraction, which manifests itself in five forms, material, organic, intellectual, animal, and social, corresponding to the five classes of phenomena, inorganic matter, life, mind, magnetism, and society: attraction, in general, is good; therefore, in particular, every desire and passion of man is good; if then, as appears to be the case, there is such a thing as evil, this must be ascribed not to the indulgence of the passions, but to the circumstances under which they are indulged: thus the distinction between right and wrong is merely the result of artificial conditions; expansion, not repression, love, not duty, is the law of a natural society; and the problem of the reformer is so to arrange the various relations of men, that every passion may find a vent and contribute its force to the common good.

From this position Fourier is led to an analysis of the passions: he divides them into three classes; those that are concerned with the satisfaction of the senses, those that are concerned with association in groups, and those that are concerned with the association of the groups in a unity: on this classification is based the arrangement of the perfect society; individuals will organise themselves in groups, the

groups in series, and the series in phalansteries; all the associations will be voluntary; the members of a group will be attracted by some one or other of the passions that tend to that particular form of union—ambition, friendship, family affection, or love; similarly, the groups will be connected by the passions that urge to larger combinations; and the result will be a harmonious organisation comprehending, in the end, the whole of mankind. In the new society all will be workers, for work will be congenial to all; each will be directed by his dominant passion to some particular task, and it is from the conjunction of several individuals having the same natural bent that the association in groups will arise; any member of one group may become a member of another, and thus avoid the monotony attending a single task; while interest in the work will be further enhanced by a friendly competition between the various groups, and by their constant party-combinations and intrigues: a single example will illustrate the way in which the system was supposed to work:—"Imagine," says Fourier, "a mass of about 600 people, half men and half women, all inspired with a passion for the same branch of industry. Let us take the series for the cultivation of pears; these 600 people will be divided into groups which will devote themselves to the production of one or two kinds of pears. Thus there will be a group of the sectaries of the butter pear, another of the sectaries of the russet pear, &c. And when every one has been

enrolled in the groups attached to his favourite pears (for he may belong to several), there will be perhaps thirty groups, distinguished by their banners and ornaments, and forming three, five, or seven divisions; for example:

"SERIES FOR THE CULTIVATION OF PEARS COMPOSED OF THIRTY-TWO GROUPS.

Division.	Numeric progression. Groups.	Kind Cultivated.
1. Van-guard . . .	2 .	Quinces, and hard bastard kinds.
2. Ascending extremity .	4 .	Hard cooking-pears.
3. Ascending wing . .	6 .	'Breaking' pears,
4. Centre of the series .	8 .	'Melting' pears.
5. Descending wing . .	6 .	'Compact' pears.
6. Descending extremity .	4 .	'Mealy' pears.
7. Rear-guard . . .	2 .	Medlars and soft bastard kinds.

"It is immaterial whether the series is composed of men, women, or children, or in part of all, the arrangement is always the same. . . . . If the series is formed regularly, as in the example given, alliances will arise between the corresponding divisions. Thus the ascending and descending wings will unite against the centre of the series, and agree to push their products at the expense of those of the centre; the two extremities will be leagued together and join the centre in its conflict with the wings. The result of this mechanism will be that each group will produce the most magnificent fruit conceivable. Similar competitions and similar alliances arise among the various

groups of a division. . . . . Then come the intrigues of series with series, and canton with canton, organised on the same plan. It may be imagined that the pear-series will be a vigorous rival of the apple-series, while, on the other hand, it will enter into alliance with the cherry-series, since the pear and the cherry are not sufficiently akin to excite to jealousy their respective cultivators."

This passage is not only an illustration but a criticism of the whole system; everything depends on the assumption that people will be born into the world who have a consuming passion for the cultivation, say, of "melting" pears; and by analogy, others, who are driven by their natural bent to the scavenging of streets or the flushing of main sewers: this assumption admitted, the difficulty is solved at once; society will organise itself, as soon as the idea is grasped, and phalansteries spring up and flourish with the inevitableness of Nature. The scheme, in fact, may be described as one of spontaneous co-operation; instead of solving the problem, it assumes that it will solve itself: this, however, has not yet occurred; and the phalansteries of Fourier are remembered only as a curious and suggestive speculation.

§ 18. Miscellaneous Socialism.

St. Simon and Fourier are the most interesting of the social theorists of the time; but they were only the most striking figures in a general movement of

ideas: every one was bent on reforming society; now it is Pierre Leroux with his text, "to each according to his needs," now Proudhon with his battle-cry, "property is theft"; here it is Cabet describing the Laws of Icaria, there Louis Blanc expounding his "organisation of labour." The "organisation of labour" calls for special notice, for Louis Blanc was to be a member of the Provisional Government in 1848; the scheme which he proposed was, briefly, as follows:—the State was to advance capital to co-operative productive societies; these societies were to be organised among themselves, and by their united competition to eliminate the individual producer; equal wages were to be paid, and all officers elected. The scheme was more definite and practical than most of the proposals of the time, and we shall come across it again in 1848.

§ 19. The Socialism of the People.

To meet the recognised social distress there was thus no lack of social theories: these, it is true, were various in their bases and their conclusions; but all agree in this, that they repudiate the mediæval belief that poverty is a necessary evil, and virtue is self-denial: they assert, on the contrary, that poverty can be cured, and that virtue is self-development; and then, with the genial optimism that underlies their faith, conclude that the millennium they assume is already within their reach. This position,

interpreted by coarser minds than theirs, emerges at the bottom of society in the crudest forms of revolutionary materialism: the propaganda which began with St. Simon ended with Eugène Sue; and such works as the "Mysteries of Paris," published in the halfpenny journals, were the source from which the people began to derive their social ideal. The literature of the factories is thus described by Heine:—"I found there many new editions of the speeches of Robespierre and the pamphlets of Marat, published in penny parts, the 'History of the Revolution' by Cabet, the 'Doctrine of the Conspiracy of Babœuf' by Buonarotti; writings which had, as it were, an odour of blood; . . . . and I heard songs sung which seemed to have been composed in hell, and whose refrains bore witness to a fury and an exasperation which made me shudder." This testimony is confirmed from other sources; material distress, utopian enthusiasm, and the revived traditions of the first revolution combined to form a temper at once of exaltation and despair, indifferent to every disaster and credulous of all success; the sentence of Pierre Leroux "every human being has a right to shelter, food and clothing," found its effective response in the device of the Lyons strikers "vivre en travaillant ou mourir en combattant:" if there were no positive remedy, there was at least the negation of despair; if it was impossible to create, at least it was possible to destroy.

§ 20. The General Situation.

From what has been said it will be seen that the situation under the Monarchy of July was, broadly speaking, as follows :—for eighteen years in succession a Conservative Government was in power ; it was confronted by the opposition not only of constitutional Liberals, but of revolutionary Republicans and Socialists ; and it was notoriously supported and directed by the Sovereign himself : there was a tendency, therefore, even for the constitutional Opposition, to pass from attacking the Ministers to attack the Monarchy itself, and to this course Republicans and Socialists were pledged by the very nature of their opinions : thus not only the policy but the form of the Government was exposed to attack, while for its defence it could only rely on that upper section of the middle class which was represented in the Chamber :—" every succeeding month," says Lord Normanby, " has tended to confirm the result of my observations—that there exists in the present state of France no attachment to any individual and no respect for any institution ; but that the system has been maintained by its identification with the material interests of the middle classes. *Enrichissez-vous* has been long said to be the paternal admonition addressed from the throne to the people."

The supporters of the Government, in fact, regarded it rather as a guarantee against anarchy, than as a

permanent and vital institution representative of the progressive interests of the nation; while to its opponents, it was simply a closed corporation, whose only *raison d'être* was the maintenance of its own existence: it declined adventures abroad, it declined expansion at home; imperturbable, self-contained, it pursued its set and inelastic purpose—to exist, to administer, and to suppress. But the movement which the Government refused to represent continued its progress in the nation; logic and sentiment, yoked with despair, drew the car of revolution. "All men are equal, free and fraternal, therefore let all have a vote!" "God is good and Humanity one, therefore let all things be held in common!" "More than men is the common Man, therefore let intellect yield to mass!" "We starve, we freeze, give us shelter and food, or we rise and kill or are killed!" half articulate, indistinct, these were the voices and these the claims that sprang from the head and heart of France: to the Government, the theories were absurd, and the demands impossible; the political question they would not, the social they could not treat: the course they had adopted with deliberation they carried through with consistency; they had made themselves a fixed point, in the hope that the country would rally round them; they were deceived, and if failure is condemnation, they were condemned: even the class on which they had relied failed them in the hour of trial; February 1848 was less a revolution than a collapse; the Government crumbled to pieces, like a mummy

exposed to the air; it was, and it was not, and in its place was the Republic.

Such, in brief, was the character of the reign, and such the general causes of its fall; it remains to indicate briefly the historical order of events.

§ 21. Summary of the Reign.

The period falls into four main divisions, (1) from August 1830 to March 1831, (2) from March 1831 to February 1836, (3) from February 1836 to October 1840, (4) from October 1840 to February 1848.

Of these divisions the first comprises two Ministries, those of August 11th and of November 2nd, 1830: neither had a clear or vigorous policy: the first contained representatives at once of the party of resistance and of the party of movement; it was this that led to its dissolution and the formation of the Ministry of November under Laffitte: Laffitte and his colleagues were supposed to represent the party of movement, but in fact they were not more decided in their policy than their predecessors; the Republican Carrel defined them as a "gouvernement par abandon," and his verdict expressed the general feeling of the country: no one was satisfied: the Ministry was drifting at a time when the Monarchy itself was at stake; Paris was in constant tumult; the mob was crying for the death of the Ministers of the *coup d'état;* the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois and the archbishop's palace were sacked;

the students of the schools and the Republican leaders were using their influence with the people to force their terms on the Government: the insurrections of Belgium, Italy, and Poland gave rise to further troubles; the Revolution of July had kindled again the aggressive idealism of 1793, and the cry was raised for a general war against the despots of Europe, for the prompt repudiation of the treaties of 1815 and the extension of the territory of France to what was called its "natural frontier:" to meet the revolutionary pressure of the streets the Ministry found no force in itself and no support in the Chamber; they remained in office long enough to pass the election law, and to carry through the trial of Polignac and his colleagues; but at the beginning of 1831 they felt themselves compelled to resign.

Laffitte was succeeded by a stronger man: with the Ministry of Périer begins the second period of the reign; it was he who inaugurated with vigour the policy of resistance, and succeeded in imposing it on the majority of the Chamber elected in July 1831: the programme, as we have seen, was order at home and non-intervention abroad; the faithful observance of the amended Charter, nothing less and nothing more. Périer was a fighting man, and he had need of all his force; the vigour of the Ministry provoked the opposition to fury; in the press, in the clubs, in the streets, there was permanent insurrection; in September 1831 Warsaw fell, and the news was followed by a riot in Paris; in November was the great

Lyons strike; minor disturbances occurred in Grenoble and other provincial towns; on every side the Government was attacked and on every side was victorious: but Périer did not live to complete his triumph; on May 16th, 1832, he succumbed to the cholera. His successors continued the work he had begun: they had still to deal with insurrection: in June 1832 the funeral of the Republican Lamarque was the occasion of a two days' battle in the streets; in the autumn of the same year the Duchesse de Berry raised a Legitimist rebellion in the west; in April 1834 occurred a second and more serious outbreak at Lyons; but still the Government triumphed, and with the end of their term of office the period of armed revolution may be said to be concluded.

Meantime, there had been no lack of important legislation; in deference to public opinion the hereditary peerage had been abolished; the administrative councils had been reorganised on an electoral basis; and a new and comprehensive system of primary education introduced: at the close of the Restoration some 16,000 communes had been without an elementary school; Guizot's law of 1833 provided for one in every commune of above 6000 inhabitants, and also created normal schools to train the teachers; by 1847 the number of schools had increased from 33,000 to 43,000, and that of the pupils from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 millions.

These were important measures: but the *raison d'être* of the Government had been less its positive legislation than its negative work of resistance;

and resistance, however necessary, is not an inspiring programme: thus while the Government was still at war with the Revolution, there had begun to appear the signs of disaffection in its own majority: a "third party" had been formed, representing less an alternative policy than an attitude of critical mistrust; its members were unwilling to associate themselves with the opposition of the Left, and yet they had ceased to have confidence in the policy they were supposed to support; they would have liked a little concession, a little relaxation of vigour: without the ability or force to form a Ministry themselves—their cabinet of November 1834 endured precisely three days—they were nevertheless sufficiently strong to ruin the existing Government: in February 1836 the Ministry resigned; and with this date closes the second period of the reign.

The period that ensued, from February 1836 to October 1840, comprises five Ministries: the majority formed by Périer was definitely broken up, and the Chamber abandoned to perpetual and profitless fluctuation: parliamentary government was discredited; it appeared to be nothing but a forcing-house of egotism and intrigue; politicians fought for the majority and did nothing with it when they got it; those who were out combined to eject those who were in, in equal oblivion of the past, greed of the present, and indifference to the future: of such combinations the most notorious is that of 1838–39, when the Left, the Left Centre, and the chiefs of the Doctrinaires

combined to overthrow the Ministry of Soult; their cry was the personal predominance of the King; and the curious spectacle was presented of Guizot and his Conservative followers taking part in an electoral campaign that threatened the Monarchy itself. The coalition was successful; but the Ministry of Soult was overthrown only to be replaced by another more colourless and less influential; and it was not till October 1840 that a stable Government was formed under the direction of Soult and Guizot. But, in the meantime, the cause of the Monarchy had suffered; the influence of the King had been publicly attacked; the Chamber had been discredited by combinations of expedience; there had been no vigorous action, either of conservation or progress; and the Government, thus confounded and inert, had been confronted with the growing demand for measures of social reform: in the May of 1840 Arago had pleaded in the Chamber for the "organisation of labour;" the demand was repudiated by Thiers, but it found an echo in the country, and the verdict of a deputation of labourers is significant of the tendency of opinion: "let our pretended statesmen understand that the people has seen in this denial of justice the proof of their radical incapacity in the face of an evil only too great, a situation only too terrible."

We have arrived at the fourth period of the reign, and it is time to speak of a movement to which we have not yet referred,—the agitation of the clergy in favour of free education.

The Restoration, as we saw, had been inclined to favour the supremacy of the Church; in 1814 the seminaries had been freed from the control of the University, and had gradually become its rivals in secondary education; while primary education was largely in the hands of the "Frères des écoles chrétiennes:" this tendency to restore to the Church its former control of education had been checked by the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1828; and the Revolution of July had appeared to favour an anti-Catholic reaction. But in spite of such a popular demonstration as the sack of the archbishop's palace, the Government itself had no antagonism to the Church; by the law of 1833 the religious elementary schools were allowed to compete freely with those of the Government; and if Guizot could have had his way he would have admitted the same principle in secondary education. The King and his Ministers, then, were favourably disposed to the Church; and at the same time there was a party in the Church which was favourably disposed to the Revolution: immediately after the events of July Lamennais and a group of disciples had dissociated themselves from the Legitimist party, proclaimed the separation of "altar" and "throne," and adopted a programme at once democratic and catholic: Lamennais himself developed into a revolutionary Republican; but his original friends and supporters, remaining in the ranks of the Church accepted the Government and the Charter, and from this constitutional platform began to agitate for

"liberty of education." Liberty of education, in fact, had been guaranteed by the amended Charter; but when it was the clergy that demanded the fulfilment of the pledge, Liberals did not hesitate to reply that it was not for them it had been intended; and the curious result ensued that a liberty was confirmed by the Charter, claimed by the Church, and refused by the Liberal party. The Church demanded the abolition of the University monopoly; they demanded it in the name of religion and morality, which suffered, as they maintained, under the guidance of the Lycées and Academies:—"in fact," says Sainte-Beuve, "the professors of the University without being hostile to religion, are not religious. The pupils perceive it, and from this atmosphere they emerge, not imbued with irreligion but indifferent to the whole question. . . . . The colleges produce young men well-taught, intelligent, with excellent manners; and of these it is easy to make the most charming libertines." The friends of the University denied the charge and retorted with an attack on the clergy; the abolition, they maintained, of the University monopoly would mean the substitution of a monopoly of the Church; behind the Liberal Catholic lurked the Jesuit and the stake: the dispute grew loud and furious; the clergy took up their opponents' weapons, the press, the platform, electoral committees; "l'Univers" and "l'Union Catholique" replied to "le Courier" and "le Journal des Débats;" Michelet and Quinet declaimed against the Jesuits at the Collège de

France, and their lecture-rooms became the arena of rival factions: it was in vain that the king and his Ministers favoured the cause of religious liberty; they dared not publicly support a policy which was identified with the counter revolution; it was impossible to pass or carry through the Chambers any project of secondary education which would satisfy both parties; those of 1836, 1841, 1844, 1847, were introduced only to be withdrawn; and it was not till 1850, when the Church and the Conservatives were combined in the defence of order, that the question received a solution: the law of that year substituted for the control of the University that of a mixed council, containing representatives not only of the Government, but of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish churches; it also sanctioned instruction by religious congregations, and permitted the establishment of private schools by any one producing guarantees of efficiency.

The question of "liberty of education" was but one of those that agitated the Ministry of Guizot; he was confronted also by complications abroad and proposals for reform at home: with his foreign policy we are not concerned; to reform he maintained the traditional opposition of the reign:—"I look in vain, I seek in vain," he said, "I cannot find among us to-day, in the actual state of society, any real and serious motive, any motive worthy of a free and sensible country, to justify the proposed electoral reform .... the movement which has brought to the front

the question with which we are concerned is a movement superficial, factitious, and false, provoked by journals and committees." The Opposition flung themselves in vain against this barrier of "resistance;" "the Government," cried Lamartine, "see but one evil for themselves and one danger to our institutions—that evil and that danger is movement . . . . to hear them, one would think that the genius of statesmen consists solely in this—to plant themselves in the situation made for them by chance or revolution, and to remain there motionless, inert, implacable, yes, implacable, to every amelioration."

Rejected in 1842 the proposals of reform were renewed in 1847; once more they were met with uncompromising resistance, once more it was asserted that they were not demanded by the country: the liberals resolved to test the question; they started all over the country a series of "reform-banquets," at which they put their case before large and miscellaneous audiences; everywhere they were received with enthusiasm; the cry was, "reform to avoid revolution," but Republicans joined the agitation and used it for their own ends. The Opposition returned to the session of 1848 strong in the support of the country: the speech from the throne was defiant: "in the midst of the agitation fomented by hostile or blind passions, one conviction animates and sustains me: it is that we possess in the Constitutional Monarchy, in the union of the great powers of the State, the most sure means of surmounting all

obstacles and satisfying all the moral and material interests of our dear country." The discussion of the Address opened on January 17th and continued till February 12th; the Opposition took the opportunity to bring in a general indictment against the Government, addressed less to the Chamber than to public opinion; they also formally claimed the right of public meeting: this right had been implicitly denied in the paragraph already quoted from the speech of the Crown, and that paragraph had been embodied in the project of Address; various amendments were proposed only to be rejected, and finally the project was adopted in its original form. The Government had triumphed in the Chamber, but the Opposition were determined to test their claim: a banquet had been arranged in Paris for the 22nd of February, and it was agreed that this opportunity should be taken to determine the legal question; the Deputies of the Opposition were to proceed to the banquetting-hall and insist upon entering in spite of the prohibition of a police official; the official was then to declare the meeting dissolved, and to invite the guests to disperse; the Deputies were to protest against this abuse of authority, and then to separate quietly, referring the decision to the law courts. The Government had consented to this arrangement; but on discovering that it was intended to make the procession to the banquet a public demonstration, they revoked their decision and prohibited the meeting. The Deputies of the Opposition yielded; but their

allies were indignant and inclined to resist. The students and the various secret societies began to excite the people; on the 22nd, miscellaneous groups began to traverse the city, crying "Down with Guizot! Long live Reform"! and at night a few barricades were raised. On the 23rd the National Guards were called out, but neither they nor the regular troops displayed any zeal for the Government; the King was alarmed and decided to sacrifice his Minister; he dismissed Guizot and appointed Molé to succeed him; the town was illuminated, and it was supposed that the danger was past. On the evening of the 23rd, however, there was a popular demonstration before Guizot's house; somebody fired a pistol, and the troops replied by a volley; fifty-two spectators fell, men and women; their corpses were crowded on to a waggon and carried through the city, surrounded by torches and cries of vengeance. The situation was growing serious; Molé declined to form a Ministry; the King summoned Odilon Barrot and Thiers, and at their instance the troops were ordered to avoid collision with the people: from that moment all was over with the Monarchy: the insurrection spread with rapidity, and was practically unopposed; the King was persuaded to abdicate in favour of the regency of the Duchesse d'Orléans; and immediately afterwards fled with his family in a hackney-coach to St. Cloud. A riot in the streets had overthrown the Monarchy, and France confirmed with indifference the verdict of a pistol-shot at Paris.

CHAPTER V

THE REVOLUTION OF 1848

L. GRÉGOIRE. "Histoire de la France."
D. STERN. "Histoire de la Révolution de 1848."
L. BLANC. "Historical Revelations."
LAMARTINE. "Histoire de la Révolution de 1848."
NORMAN[redacted] "A Year of Revolution."
E. SPUL[redacted] "Histoire Parlementaire de la Seconde République."
E. THOMAS. "Histoire des Ateliers Nationaux."
ODILON BARROT. "Mémoires."
W. N. SENIOR. "Journals kept in France and Italy from 1848 to 1852."

CHAPTER V

THE REVOLUTION OF 1848

§ 1. The Provisional Government and the Republic.

After the abdication of the king, the Duchess of Orleans, whom he had appointed Regent, proceeded with her son the Comte de Paris to the Chamber of Deputies. The Chamber was in doubt and confusion; it was uncertain whether it would support the Regency or declare for a Provisional Government. The Duchess was received with emotion; her situation and bearing appealed to the chivalry of the house; Dupin and Barrot rose to support her claims, and if the decision had lain with the Deputies they might have carried their point: but there was another power to reckon with, the insurgents of the street; the debate in the Chamber was cut short by an incursion of the mob, headed by a butcher with his knife, and shouting for the abolition of the Monarchy; Ledru-Rollin rose to propose a Provisional Government; Lamartine emerged from silence and doubt to support him at the tribune; and while

he was still speaking a second incursion from the galleries flooded the Deputies' benches: the Duchess escaped with difficulty, the President vacated the chair, Dupont de l'Eure was hastily thrust into his place, and amidst universal confusion a Provisional Government was proclaimed; its members were Lamartine, Ledru-Rollin, Dupont, Arago, Marie, Garnier-Pagés, Crémieux; but to these were afterwards added, from a list accepted at the office of the "Réforme," the names of Louis Blanc, Flocon, Marrast, and Albert.

In theory, the Provisional Government had no constituent powers; they were there to govern, not to determine the form of government; but practically they found themselves compelled to declare the Republic: the combatants from whom they had received their mandate had made up their mind on the point, and their mind, for the moment, was master of the destinies of France. At first, indeed, the Government endeavoured to temporise; they drafted a proclamation which ran as follows:—"though the Provisional Government acts solely in the name of the French people, and though it prefers the Republican form of Government, neither the people of Paris nor the Provisional Government pretend to substitute their opinion for the opinion of the citizens, who will be consulted as to the final form of the Government;" before publication, however, this document was altered in the following sense:—"the Provisional Government wills the

Republic, under condition of approval by the people, who will be immediately consulted;" and finally, on the 26th, the announcement was made without reserve: "in the name of the French people, Monarchy, under every form, is abolished without possibility of return."

§ 2. Paris and France.

Thus, for the second time, the Republic was definitely constituted; the Revolution had run its circle, from Monarchy by right divine, through Monarchy by constitutional fiction, to the sovereignty of the people; universal suffrage, liberty of the press, right of association, and the rest, once more were guaranteed in theory; were they now, at last, for the first time, to become realities in practice? Paris had made the Republic; would it be accepted by France? and if so, in what sense and with what limitations?

One thing is certain, to begin with; the country was unprepared: it is true that adhesion to the Republic were received from every class and every profession; that there were deputations of labourers and officials, of the law, the church, and the army; that the University "exalted this revolution, accomplished to the profit of the human race, through the instrumentality of the people armed with the invincible force of God;" that priests intoned in every church their "domine salvum fac populum;" and that Paris abandoned herself to a succession of fraternal

fêtes. One among these manifestations is specially notable: the students, we are told, of the various schools assembled at the Panthéon, and marched thence in procession to the Champ de Mars; at their head was a sapper of the Corps of Engineers, "a symbol of labour and intelligence;" on his left, a pupil of the Normal School, carrying the "Social Contract" crowned with everlastings; on his right, a labourer with a pickaxe, similarly adorned: arrived at the Champ de Mars, they join for a moment in the digging operations of the employés of the "National Workshops"; then "all united, students and labourers, hand in hand, and arm in arm, assemble at the foot of the tree of liberty, singing the Marseillaise;" thence they proceed to the Hôtel de Ville, and require the Provisional Government "to invite citizens who possess an income to voluntarily impose on themselves, for the profit of the Republic and within what they consider to be equitable limits, a sacrifice proportioned to their fortune."

Such ceremonies dimly recall the federation festivals of 1790; like them, they are a testimony of genuine feeling, and of equally genuine misconception of the facts: France, as a matter of fact, was no more fraternal in 1848 than she had been in 1790; so far was she from welcoming the Republic with enthusiasm that it was doubtful whether she would accept it at all; "no one likes this Republic," says Lord Normanby, "nor was the least prepared for it;" and his statement is amply confirmed by the conduct of the

Republicans themselves: the one thing they feared was an appeal to the country; they knew that, speaking generally, the large proprietors were Legitimists, the middle classes, or at least a section of them, Orleanists, and the peasants, if anything, Bonapartists: the first act of Ledru-Rollin, Minister of the Interior, was to send out commissioners to republicanise the departments; and one of their principal functions was to control the elections to the Constituent Assembly; an extract from the circular he addressed to them will indicate at once his conviction as to the feeling of the country and his determination to control and overawe it:—"your powers are unlimited. Agents of a revolutionary authority, you are revolutionary too. The victory of the people has imposed on you the mandate to proclaim and consolidate its work. To accomplish this task, you are invested with the sovereignty; you depend only on your conscience; you must do what circumstances require for the public safety. Thanks to our civilisation, there is nothing terrible in this mission. Up to now, you have not had any serious resistance to crush, and you have been able to remain calm in your force; you must not, however, be under any illusion as to the state of the country. Republican sentiments require to be vigorously excited, and to that end it is necessary to entrust all political functions to sage and sympathetic men." "The elections are your great work, they ought to prove the salvation of the country. It is on the

composition of the Assembly that our destinies depend. It must be animated with the revolutionary spirit, otherwise we march to civil war and anarchy. In this matter, beware of the intrigues of double-faced men, who, after having served the Monarchy, declare themselves servants of the people. Such men are deceiving you, and you must refuse them your support. Be assured, that to solicit the honour of a seat in the National Assembly, a man must be free of the traditions of the past. Let your word of order be everywhere; new men, and, as far as possible, men who come from the people."

But, if the country was not Republican, neither was it devoted to the fallen king; there were many adherents of a Constitutional Monarchy, but none of the system of Louis Philippe; the provinces had been surprised by the Revolution, but it cannot be said that they were disgusted; they were simply unprepared; and in this unpreparedness they would probably accept the Republic, not with conviction nor with loyalty, but merely as a temporary expedient till some more desirable establishment could be attained. But it was not so that Republicans conceived the Republic; to them it meant not merely a machine, but an impulse, not merely a form, but a spirit; it was to issue, like a new Athene, from the head of the god Humanity, armed for the succour of the oppressed, inspired for the guidance of the free; it was to be the symbol of fraternity, the pledge of equality, the guarantee of liberty; it was to purify

every passion, to solve every problem, and to realise, in a moment of time, the ultimate human ideal. A Republic, so conceived, was not merely a change of Government, it was a reconstitution of society; and any attempt to achieve it must involve the active, intelligent, and enthusiastic co-operation of every talent and every class in every district of France. Such was the ideal; what now were the facts? A complex and defective social organisation, imperfectly understood and unreservedly condemned; in Paris, a Provisional Government, appointed at the dictation of a mob, in order to create the Republic; in the provinces, uncertainty and confusion, contempt for the fallen authorities, mistrust of the new ones, ignorance of economic conditions, and blind fear of schemes of reform; on the one hand, a minority of idealists, insatiable in their demands, unlimited in their faith, unpractical in their proposals; on the other, a complex mass of conflicting interests and ideas, unprepared for decisive action, unintelligent of the new issues, unaware of a common aim, but ready to unite, in defiance of principle, under the stress of a single negative passion—the terror of anarchy. Such was the situation—a great problem had been posed, a great hope awakened, but no one possessed the solution, no one could guarantee the fulfilment: "the Revolution," said Proudhon, "had come before its time;" and his description of his feelings when he saw it approach is sufficiently remarkable to deserve quotation:—"a Republican of yesterday and the day before, a

Republican at college, in the workshop, in the study, I shivered with terror to see the Republic approach. I shuddered to think that no one, around me or above me, believed in the arrival of the Republic, or at least in an arrival so swift. Events were moving on, destiny fulfilling itself, the social revolution immanent, and no one, above or below, appeared to be aware of the fact. What was to be done in a revolution, what was to happen to us all, when there was no one who possessed its secret, its idea? The Republicans, and they were few enough, had the faith of the Republic, but not its science. The Socialists, almost unknown, whose name had not yet resounded on the stage, had also the faith of the social Revolution; they had not its key nor its science. Numerous criticisms of the old society had been made, most of them vague, all of them imbued with sentimentality and mysticism, some more philosophic and more reasonable; but from all this chaos of declamatory discussion, no light had been struck: the daily press did not occupy itself with the question; the immense majority of readers was indifferent to it. And yet, the Revolution, the Republic, Socialism, each supporting the other, were approaching with giant strides! I saw them, I touched them, I fled before the monster of democratic Socialism, whose riddle I could not expound; and an inexpressible terror froze my soul, depriving me even of thought. . . . . I wept for the poor labourer, whom I saw by anticipation plunged for years in the misery of enforced

idleness. I wept for the *bourgeoisie*, whom I saw ruined, bankrupt, in arms against the proletariat. . . . . Before the Republic was born I was already wearing its mourning, and suffering to expiate its sins. This Revolution which was about to break out in the political order, was the point of departure of a social revolution of which no one possessed the pass-word. Contrary to all experience, contrary to the order of historical development hitherto invariably followed, the fact was to come before the idea, as if Providence had wished, this time, to strike without warning."

§ 3. Republicans and Socialists.

The distinction here made between the political and the social revolution is the key to the earlier events of the year 1848. Granting that the Republic were established, what was it to signify? It has already been noted that there were two sections of the Provisional Government, one appointed in the Chamber of Deputies, the other at the office of the "Réforme"; to these two sections, roughly speaking, correspond two policies, represented respectively by Lamartine and by Louis Blanc.

At the time of the Revolution of February Lamartine was not yet an avowed Republican; during the latter years of the Monarchy he had been associated with the most advanced opposition, had condemned the "government of corruption," and prophesied the "revolution of contempt"; the enthusiasm provoked

by his brilliant rhetoric had been kindled to frenzy by his "History of the Girondins," and at the beginning of 1848 he was probably the most popular man in France. But it was not till the 24th of February that he finally declared for the Republic, and then after painful hesitation and with as much anxiety as hope; he had no doubt, indeed, as to the ideal, but he had doubt as to its immediate application; he believed the Republic to be the ultimate form of government, but he did not feel sure that the moment was come to adopt it: it was necessary, however, to decide, and he decided in favour of the Republic; he was carried at once to power, and for the first few weeks of the Revolution was the strongest man in France: how, then, did he interpret the cause he had undertaken to represent? the answer may be best given in his own words:—"I regard the Republican Government, that is to say, the government of peoples by their own reason and their own will, as the sole aim and the sole end of the great civilisations, as the sole means of realising the great general truths that a people desires to inaugurate in its laws. Other forms of government are states of tutelage, confessions of the eternal minority of peoples, imperfections in the sight of philosophy, humiliations in the sight of history." This is a general confession of faith; elsewhere he declares, more particularly:—"the people are the Revolution. In entering upon it, they bring to it their own needs of work, of industry, of education, of

agriculture, of commerce, of morality, of prosperity, of property, of cheap living, in a word, of civilisation;" and proposes as the aim of the new Government "charity among the different classes of citizens—to be realised by all such institutions of assistance, association, benevolence, as are compatible with the liberty of capital and the security of property." The last words are significant; they show that Lamartine, while he hoped the Republic might discover a solution of the economic problem, was determined to have nothing to do with the proposals of the Socialists, and in this he was supported by the majority of the Provisional Government. But the working men who had fought on the barricades and supplied the material force of the Revolution had acted in the expectation that with the Government would fall the tyranny of capital; to them the Republic was Socialist or nothing, and they were not to be comforted by general hopes of a gradual and tentative amelioration; they believed in the possibility of a social transformation, radical and instantaneous, and this they were determined to exact from the men they had "delegated" to authority. There were two men in the Provisional Government, Blanc and Albert, who shared this view; Albert was a working man; Blanc we have already had occasion to notice as the author of the "Organisation of Labour;" his conception of the Republic he has expressed himself in the following terms:—"it has always been my opinion that the Republican form of government is not the sole object to be aimed

at, even by politicians of the Republican school, if their love for the commonwealth be sincere and disinterested. . . . . I believed then, as I do now, that the chief end to be kept in view is to make him that works enjoy the fruits of his work; to restore to the dignity of human nature those whom the excess of poverty degrades; to enlighten those whose intelligence, from want of education, is but a dim vacillating lamp in the midst of darkness; in one word, to enfranchise the people, by endeavouring to abolish this double slavery, ignorance and misery!"

With this general statement of the end Lamartine and his colleagues might agree; it was on the question of means that the difference of opinion arose: Blanc was a Socialist, that is to say he wished to replace private by public property; and this he hoped to achieve by means of co-operative productive associations, federated together so as gradually to oust by competition the private producer, and started in the first instance by loans advanced by the State. Such was the most definite expression of the Socialism of 1848: but the word had been used to include much more than this; it had been identified, passionately and vaguely, with revolution and robbery; secret societies and insurrectionary clubs had urged and were urging its propaganda; terrorism bred of exaltation and despair had rallied around it the forces of revolt; misconceived by friends and foes, blurred by rhetoric, swollen by passion, it had come to be regarded not as a rational scheme of economic reform, but as a

conspiracy to dissolve society in a universal scrimmage for property: under this general condemnation fell the project of Louis Blanc; the Provisional Government was divided into Socialists and anti-Socialists; and before it had been in existence a day was irreconcilably at variance with itself.

§ 4. The "Droit au Travail."

For the question at issue could not be postponed: almost from the moment of its installation, and for sixty hours at a stretch, the Provisional Government was besieged in the Hôtel de Ville: the besiegers, it is true, might be regarded as allies, but allies on condition of being obeyed; miscellaneously armed with muskets, swords, pikes, bayonets and the like, they filled the place in front of the building, broke down the railings, forced the gates, and thronged every hall and passage till they reached the room where the Government sat: without, thundered the chorus of the Marseillaise; within, was the clash of steel, the detonation of aimless discharges, windows shattering, woodwork crashing, altercations, threats and fragments of song; and in the midst of this confusion, backed by this argument of force, arrived a deputation to demand the recognition of the "right to labour" (*droit au travail*): their spokesman, Marche, is thus described by Lamartine:—"a man of twenty or twenty-five, of middle height, upright, strong, of firm and robust appearance;

his face, blackened by the smoke of powder, was pale with emotion. His lips trembled with anger. His eyes, deep-sunk under a projecting forehead, shot fire. It was the people's electricity concentrated in a look. His face had the expression at once of reflection and bewilderment, a contrast which is sometimes found where an idea, however false, has become a sincere conviction and a determination to achieve the impossible. In his left hand he rolled a strip of ribbon or red cloth: in his right he held the muzzle of a rifle whose butt end he struck on the floor at every word he spoke. He seemed to be at once intimidated and resolute. One could see that he was fortified against all weakness and compromise by a rigorous predetermination. He seemed to feel and hear behind him the immense and furious people whose organ he was, who were listening to him and would bring him to account for his words."

Such was the orator; his harangue, if Lamartine may be trusted, concluded with a demand for "the extermination of property and capitalists; the immediate installation of the proletariat in community of goods; the proscription of the bankers, the rich, the merchants, the bourgeois of every condition above that of wage earners. A Government with the axe in its hand to level all superiorities of birth, ease, even of hereditary labour; finally, the acceptance, without reply and without delay, of the red flag, to signify to society its defeat, to the people its victory, to Paris the Terror, to all foreign Governments invasion."

All this, reduced to comparative sobriety, resolved itself into a claim for the recognition of the *droit au travail.* Lamartine approached and entangled the man in his eloquence; he hesitated and appeared to postpone his demand; "the people," he exclaimed, "consent to put three months of misery at the disposal of the Provisional Government;" but meantime Louis Blanc had already drawn up a decree, which was submitted to his colleagues, signed in haste, and issued on the spot; it ran as follows:—"the Provisional Government of the French Republic engages to guarantee the existence of the workman by labour; it engages to guarantee work to all citizens; it recognises that the workmen ought to form associations in order to enjoy the legitimate reward of their labour; the Provisional Government restores to the workmen, to whom it belongs, the million which will soon be due on the civil list."

§ 5. The "National Workshops."

This decree, as we have seen, was practically extorted by force from the Provisional Government; it promised much more than was ever guaranteed by such Socialism as Louis Blanc's, and *a fortiori* much more than a Government could extemporise into performance. Something, however, must be done: Blanc, who had composed the decree, had his own scheme for its fulfilment; he suggested that a "Ministry of Progress" should be established, to

organise co-operative associations on the lines he had already laid down: this was "Socialism," and the majority of the Government would have nothing to do with it; moreover it would not have met the immediate needs: the Revolution had intensified an industrial crisis already prepared by speculation in railways; "failures were spoken of everywhere as imminent; the most respectable firms were reported to be on the point of stoppage; some banking-houses, such as those of Gouin and Ganeron, had already stopped payment; the house of Baudin had also gone; others were struggling with difficulty against the torrent; and manufacturers, merchants, tradesmen, all of them suddenly bewildered, turned to the Provisional Government for assistance." Capital was withdrawn, factories closed; thousands of men were out of work, and all of these were armed; in the interest of public order, as well as to redeem their pledges, the Government were bound to adopt some measures of relief; they did the only thing they could—they opened "national workshops" for the unemployed. The results were as might have been anticipated; not only did those apply for work who had been thrown out of employment by the crisis, but also all who had chosen to come out on strike for higher wages; so that the Government was furnishing, in fact, not only relief but strike pay: applicants crowded in from the provinces, and the numbers enrolled increased daily, till they reached a total of over 100,000: of these 12,000 at most could be set to work at a time, and that was unproductive work of

excavation in the Champ de Mars; all, however, must be paid, 2fr. for a day of work, 1fr. for a day of idleness; so that the final result was the organisation and support by the State of 100,000 militant mercenaries, furnished, as citizens, with a vote, and as members of the National Guard with arms, aggressive in proportion to their consciousness of force, aggrieved in proportion to their recognised claims, and ready at any moment to descend into the street, and extort from the Government that maintained them, by the arms they had received for its defence, a continued and more efficient "organisation of labour," according to the principle itself had guaranteed.

§ 6. The Labour Commission at the Luxembourg.

But this was not all: the Government had refused to accept Louis Blanc's proposal of a "Ministry of Progress;" instead, they put him at the head of a "commission of inquiry": he accepted—unwillingly, he declares—this post of research unsupported by powers of reform, and established in the Luxembourg a "Labour Parliament," composed of delegates sent by the various trade societies. Here were discussed the problems of labour and capital, and here also were elaborated certain definite proposals; it was the Commission that induced the Government to issue two decrees announcing the abolition of "sweating" and a reduction in the hours of labour; they acted also,

not without success, as a court of arbitration, and succeeded in founding, without funds, co-operative associations of tailors, saddlers and spinners, for the performance of Government contracts. But such achievements, however useful, were as nothing to the hopes the Revolution had excited; the more the delegates discussed the situation the more they were struck with their own impotence, and the more convinced of that of the Government: the Government had rejected the scheme proposed by Blanc; what did it offer as an alternative? nothing! and nothing would be the outcome of their own labours! The speeches of their president did not tend to moderate their passion and their demands:—"when I was little more than a child I said 'this social order is iniquitous; I swear before God and before my conscience if ever I am called to regulate the conditions of this iniquitous society, I will not forget that I have been one of the most unfortunate children of the people, that society has weighed upon me.' And I took against this social order, that renders unhappy so many of our brothers, the oath of Hannibal. . . . . My friends, be well assured, you will be not only powerful, you will be not only rich, you will be kings. For all men are equal, all men are kings. . . . . Long live the Republic, under which there will be no more rich and no more poor!" Stirred by such rhetoric as this, with a revolution behind them and the millennium in front, the members of the Labour Parliament, representative of 30,000 or 40,000 workmen, became the nucleus of

a compact organisation, suspicious of the majority of the Provisional Government, and ready at any provocation to overthrow it by force.

§ 7. The Clubs.

The national workshops and the Luxembourg were thus two camps of disaffection ready, when the circumstances should arise, to turn against the authority that had called them into being; a third element of revolt had spontaneously organised itself in clubs. These had been rapidly formed on the morrow of the Revolution; their principal leaders were Blanqui, Barbès, Raspail, Cabet; all were Socialist in their tendencies, all mistrusted the Government, and some hundred of them received a common direction from a central "Club of Clubs."

§ 8. March 17th and April 16th.

Such were the elements against which the Provisional Government had to contend; improvised by the choice of the people, it was threatened with dismissal at their good pleasure; the regular troops on which it might have relied it was persuaded to remove from Paris; there remained for its defence in extremities the bourgeois companies of the National Guard: in the very bosom of fraternity class drew apart from class; "Socialism" was confronted with "order," the working-men with the "bourgeois;" and

the rival forces waited only an occasion for joining issue.

They had not long to wait: the elections for the Constituent Assembly had been fixed for April 9; Lamartine and the majority in the Government were anxious to depose, as soon as might be, their irregular and dictatorial authority; but their extremer colleagues, as has been noticed already, and especially Ledru-Rollin, the Minister of the Interior, were afraid to entrust the fate of the Republic to an Assembly elected by ignorant voters under the dominion of local and probably reactionary influences; it was therefore their policy to postpone the elections till the country had been argued or overawed into submission: in this policy they could count on the support of the democratic and socialist forces; and with their aid, it was hoped, it might be possible to persuade or terrorise the Government into submission. A monster demonstration was arranged for March 17; the clubs, the trade societies and a miscellaneous crowd, in numbers estimated at 150,000, marched in procession through the streets and surrounded the Hôtel de Ville; they were unarmed and in perfect order; their deputation, admitted to the Government, demanded imperiously an instantaneous decree for the postponement of the elections—"we will not retire till you have deliberated here, in our presence, and at once;" the Government rose in indignation; Lamartine was eloquent, Blanc reproachful, all uncompromising in their refusal; the deputation

wavered and finally retired, without any engagement being made. For the moment the Government had triumphed, and triumphed by moral force; nevertheless, they decided to adjourn the elections to April 23; and a second and more threatening demonstration was arranged for the 16th. The original occasion of the gathering was an election of officers for the National Guard by the trades represented at the Luxembourg; after the election, the assembly was to proceed to the Hôtel de Ville, "to offer to the Provisional Government the support of our patriotism against reactionists," and "to prove that the idea of organisation of labour, and of association, so courageously upheld by the men who have devoted themselves to our cause, are the chief object of the people." Such were the intentions of the demonstration as set forth by the Luxembourg; but it was a very different account that was received by Lamartine and Ledru-Rollin; they were informed that it was proposed to overthrow the Provisional Government and to set up a Committee of Public Safety, who would guarantee the postponement of the elections and impress on the Republic a Socialist direction. They determined accordingly to sound the rappel to summon the National Guards; the question was, would they respond, and would they respond in time? Lamartine proceeded to the Hôtel de Ville, in doubt if he would ever leave it alive; but the rappel had been sounded, and the Guards were assembling; they reached the place in time to cut the column of the advancing crowd,

surrounded the Hôtel de Ville, and only opened their ranks to admit a small and necessarily pacific deputation: once more, the Government was saved, and saved, this time, by the middle class: no further attempt was made to postpone the elections, which were held, in perfect order, on the 23rd of April.

§ 9. The Constituent Assembly.

These elections were made by universal suffrage, that is to say by 8,000,000 electors instead of some 200,000, as under the last Government: it was impossible that the majority of the new voters should have any definite conviction of their own as to the course that ought to be pursued by a country in whose affairs they had never been instructed, on the morrow of a revolution they had not helped to prepare; their choice must have been determined by the resultant of a number of conflicting forces, the local influence of the landlord, or of the prefects and mayors; the promises or threats of the Minister of the Interior and his "commissioners"; resentment at the tax of 45 centimes imposed by the new Government; a general sense of insecurity and the desire to support, at all cost, the party of order: but whatever may have been the determining motive of their votes, the result was the return of an Assembly containing, among its 900 members, over 400 Monarchists, but prepared on the whole, under present conditions, to try the experiment of a Republic: a Republic,

however, of "order" not of "Socialism"; Lamartine was returned by ten Departments, while the names of Ledru-Rollin and Blanc appeared only towards the bottom of the Parisian list.

The Assembly met on May 4th: the same day it pledged itself to the Republic; "the National Assembly, interpreting faithfully the sentiments of the people that elected it, before beginning its labours, declares, in the name of the French people, in the face of the whole world, that the Republic, proclaimed on the 24th of February, is and will remain the form of Government in France." After this vote had been taken the Assembly adjourned to the steps of the Palais Bourbon, and there, in the presence of the multitude, renewed their solemn pledge; fraternisation followed, and patriotic cries; the Republic, it seemed, was guaranteed by a permanent union of hearts.

The next duty of the Assembly was to establish a temporary executive; the Provisional Government had made its report and resigned; after some discussion five of its members, Arago, Garnier-Pagés, Marie, Lamartine and Ledru-Rollin, were reappointed as an "executive commission"; Ledru-Rollin was only included on the pressing instance of Lamartine; Blanc and his Socialist colleagues were definitely set aside.

§ 10. MAY 15TH.

The Assembly had thus declared its policy; it would establish a Republic, but not a Republic of

Socialism; accordingly, the Socialist leaders in the clubs prepared for action. On May 10th Blanc renewed his proposition for a "Ministry of Progress"; it was rejected, and immediately there appeared a protest from the Luxembourg:—"the promises made on the barricades not having been accomplished, and the Assembly having refused on the 10th of May to form a Ministry of labour and progress, we, working men, delegates at the Luxembourg, have unanimously decided not to take part in the fête, so called, of Concord." Such was the written protest; a more striking one, of action, was prepared for the 15th of May. On that day Walewski was to present to the Assembly a petition in favour of Poland, and it was determined to reinforce his appeal by a popular demonstration: he was in the middle of his harangue when a tumult was heard outside; the building was being inundated by a mob: Lamartine left the Chamber to make trial of the magic of his voice; but the potent charm was broken; he was cut short by cries of "plus de lyre," and retired discomfited; in a few moments the Chamber was in possession of the crowd: "the first irruption of the mob," says Lord Normanby, "into the hall of meeting itself, took place from the public tribunes, to which they probably best knew their way. From whence, swarming like locusts, they dropped over into the body of the Salle still screaming, and shouting and tumbling over each other; they then rushed wildly about, apparently without any fixed object, till a vigorous attack from without

upon the lower doors concentrated their attention upon that point, and without any attempt at opposition they opened them wide to admit their comrades. The mob that rushed in was of the most heterogeneous description, some few well-dressed men who appeared to have authority over the others, but the greater mass were either in blouse or shirt-sleeves, their coats and jackets being slung over their shoulders, whilst there was not the slightest attempt to conceal the bayonets or knives with which most of them were armed."

Blanc, Ledru-Rollin, Barbés and others endeavoured in vain to quiet the mob and induce them to retire; the confusion grew wilder and wilder, till, at its height, one Hubert pronounced the dissolution of the National Assembly; a new Provisional Government was proclaimed, comprising the most popular Socialist leaders; and the crowd, with Albert and Barbés at their head, departed to instal them at the Hôtel de Ville. But meantime the rappel had been beaten, and the National Guards were assembling; Lamartine put himself at their head and followed at the heels of the insurgents; the new Provisional Government was expelled before it had had time to instal itself, and Socialism succumbed once more to the bourgeois force of order.

§ 11. The Days of June.

The Assembly had won the day; but there was no security for any Government till the root of disorder

was removed. What was to be done with the national workshops? here was the great problem. Trélat, the Minister of Public Works, endeavoured to elaborate a scheme for their gradual dissolution, by drafting the men as occasion arose on to private and public works; but the Assembly was desperate; the words "il faut en finir" were pronounced; and it was decided to apply at once the following measures—to offer service in the army to the bachelors between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five; to invite private employers to apply for labour; to dismiss on the spot all who refused their offers; and to draft the remainder as quickly as possible on to works in the provinces. The publication of this decree was the signal of insurrection; a deputation of the workmen to remonstrate was met with the uncompromising reply "if the labourers do not voluntarily submit to the decree they will be expelled by force from Paris"; this was on the 22nd; on the 23rd the labourers assembled at the Panthéon, and marched to the Place de la Bastille; there they bared their heads and knelt in honour of the "martyrs of liberty," and then proceeded to battle with the cry of "bread or lead." The insurrection had been carefully prepared; the labouring population was organised in brigades, each under their appointed chiefs, and to each division was assigned its special barricade; on the other side were the regular troops and the bourgeois companies of the National Guard, under the direction of Cavaignac, who had been appointed dictator for the purpose:

the battle lasted four days, and the victory of the Government was dearly bought; among the troops were counted 900 killed and 2000 wounded; no estimate could be formed of the losses of the insurgents.

Such was the comment of events on the proclamation of the "droit au travail." The fête of Concord had been celebrated exactly a month before.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND REPUBLIC

L. GRÉGOIRE. "Histoire de la France."

E. SPULLER. "Histoire Parlementaire de la Seconde République."

V. PIERRE. "Histoire de la Seconde République."

ODILON BARROT. "Mémoires."

In drawing up my summary of the events of the *Coup d'état* I have endeavoured to supplement and check the account of Mr. Kinglake by various other narratives favourable or the reverse: but the facts remain, and I suppose are bound to remain, in some obscurity.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND REPUBLIC

§ 1. The Constituent Assembly and the Social Question.

The immediate effect of universal suffrage had been the return of an Assembly whose main pre-occupation was public order: in this attitude the deputies had been confirmed by the insurrections of May and June; Socialism was more closely than ever identified with anarchy and crime, and the Republic, in contradistinction, with the conservation of society: the character, not indeed of the Assembly, but of the anti-Socialist passion of which it was a paler reflection, may be gathered from the following lines on Proudhon written by a Spanish Catholic:—"never has mortal sinned so deeply against humanity and the Holy Spirit. When this chord of his heart resounds it is always with an eloquent and vigorous sound. No, it is not he who speaks then, it is another who is he, who holds him, who possesses him, and throws him panting into epileptic convulsions; it is another who is more than he, and who is perpetually in converse with him. What he

says is sometimes so strange, and he says it in so strange a manner, that the mind is kept in suspense, not knowing whether it is a man who speaks or a devil." The Assembly, translating this rhetoric into parliamentary language, stigmatised in the following terms a proposition made by Proudhon to remit a sixth of all interest and rent then falling due, and to pay another sixth into the public treasury:—"the National Assembly, considering that the proposition of the citizen Proudhon is an odious attempt upon the principles of public morality, that it violates property, that it encourages informers, that it appeals to the worst passions; considering, moreover, that the orator has calumniated the Revolution of February 1848, by pretending to make it an accomplice of the theories he has developed, passes to the order of the day."

It was impossible to break more definitely with Socialism in the sense in which the word was generally understood: but the Provisional Government had left a legacy of which their successors were bound to dispose; the "droit au travail" had been proclaimed, and the Assembly could not ignore it; in some way or other they must recognise the social—if not Socialist—significance of the Revolution: after considerable discussion they adopted the following declaration:—"the Republic is bound to protect the citizen in his person, his family, his religion, his property, his labour, and to put within the reach of all the instruction with which no one can dispense; it is bound, by a fraternal assistance, to guarantee the

existence of citizens in distress, either by procuring them work within the limits of its resources, or by giving relief to those who are not fit to work, in the cases where such relief cannot be supplied by their families." This was a pledge which, at any rate, the State would be able to fulfil, and it was not the only attempt of the Assembly to meet the social problem; they also opened a credit of 3,000,000 frs. to form co-operative associations: there can be no more curious example than this of the confusion which prevailed as to the meaning of "Socialism:" Louis Blanc was regarded as the chief of the Socialists, and in that capacity had just been driven into exile by the Assembly; and yet that same Assembly had now adopted a measure which was merely an instalment of what he had been demanding from the beginning of the revolution. The practical result of the experiment is an interesting comment on his scheme; it is as follows: of fifty-six associations started on the public credit, there remained twenty-six in 1852, and nine in 1858: the failures were due to causes with which co-operators are now familiar enough—"the incompatibility of temperament among the associates, the instability of characters, the want of harmony, the absence of a voluntary discipline to take the place of the compulsory discipline of the ordinary workshops, finally, and above all, the incapacity of the majority of the managers, and the dishonesty of a few:" but these are causes which would have affected the societies of Louis Blanc as much as they did those of the National

Assembly; and it is clear that the system which he had announced as an immediate panacea, would have proved in his hands, as it has done in those of others, no more than a tentative and arduous measure of amelioration.

§ 2. The Constitution.

Such was the attempt of the Assembly to deal with the social question; but its main business was the drafting of a Constitution. A committee had been formed for this purpose in May, and the result of its labours was the production of a work which, in constituting the Republic, destroyed it. It was proposed that the Government should be vested in a single legislative Chamber and a President, and that both should be elected by universal suffrage; that is to say, there would be two co-ordinate authorities face to face, each deriving its mandate directly from the people; conflict was bound to ensue, and there could be little doubt on which side the victory would lie; the President, with the prestige of a name, the pose of a personality, and the directness and simplicity of an individual policy, would be bound to prevail over a divided and incongruous Assembly with a people accustomed for centuries to personal government and cherishing still in their imagination the demonic figure of the first Napoleon. The danger was foreseen by the clearest thinkers of the Assembly, and various amendments were proposed; M. Grévy,

for example, suggested that the executive should be vested in a President of the Council of Ministers, elected, and always revocable by, the Assembly; "are you sure," he said, in the course of his speech, "that an ambitious man raised to the throne of the presidency will not be tempted to perpetuate his power? And if this man is a scion of one of those families which have reigned over France, if he has never formally renounced what he calls his rights, if commerce is languishing, if the people is in distress, if it is suffering from one of those crises when misery and deception deliver it to those who mask by promises their projects against liberty, will you answer for it that this man, this man of ambition, will not end by overthrowing the Republic?" The words were prophetic, but they were disregarded; to the Republicans the right of the people to choose their President was an ultimate fact; and if the exercise of that right should lead to the destruction of every other, the nation, indeed, might suffer, but logic, at least, would be safe: "let God and the people pronounce," cried Lamartine, "something must be left to Providence!" something accordingly was left, and that something was the fate of the Republic; the amendment of M. Grévy was rejected by 643 votes to 158, and the Constitution, as originally proposed, adopted on November 4th by a majority of over 700.

§ 3. Louis Bonaparte and the Presidential Election.

The Presidential election was fixed for December 10th; there were five candidates, Louis Bonaparte, Cavaignac, Ledru-Rollin, Raspail, Lamartine; but the real choice was between Cavaignac and Louis Bonaparte. Cavaignac was the Dictator of the days of June, and since then the head of the Executive. Louis Bonaparte was the son of the former King of Holland, and nephew of the great Napoleon; since the death of the Duc de Reichstadt he had been the recognised head of his family; in that capacity he had made two attempts to establish himself in France, one in 1836, the other in 1840; both had ended not merely in failure but in ridiculous fiasco; on the first occasion he had been shipped to America, on the second he was imprisoned at Ham, where he devoted himself to literature, and elaborated a scheme for the "extinction of poverty;" in 1846 he escaped to England, where he was living when the Revolution broke out. Throughout his curious career, a conspirator in Italy, a prisoner in France, a country gentleman in England, at once an adventurer, a student, and a visionary thinker, he had been dominated by one conception, that of his own predestined empire:—"in all my adventures," he wrote, "I have been governed by one principle. I believe that from time to time men are created whom I will call

providential, in whose hands the destinies of their country are placed. I believe myself to be one of those men. If I am mistaken, I may perish uselessly; if I am right, Providence will enable me to fulfil my mission. But, right or wrong, I will persevere, whatever be the difficulties or the dangers. Living or dying, I will serve France." "He was impressed," said Lanjuinais, "with a perfect conviction that he was destined to end the Revolution, and to restore France to prosperity under a Bonaparte dynasty." The Revolution of 1848 was his opportunity: the pose which he then assumed was that of a faithful and unambitious citizen, excluded from public trust by the misfortune of his name; he hastened to greet the new Republic, but withdrew when he found that his presence was regarded as suspicious; twice he was elected to the Constituent Assembly and twice refused to take his seat, for fear he should be thought to compromise the cause of the Republic; he was elected again, by five departments, and this time he accepted the mandate: it was in September 1848 that he made his first appearance in the Chamber, and during his attendance there, in the debate on the Constitution, a curious scene occurred: a deputy, Anthony Thouret, proposed that descendants of the families that had reigned in France should be declared ineligible for the Presidency; the motion was obviously aimed at Bonaparte, who rose and protested in the tribune; when he had finished Thouret took his place, and uttered the following sentence:—

"I thought this man was dangerous; after hearing him, I perceive that I was wrong, and I withdraw my amendment." The Assembly laughed; they were wrong: "this man was dangerous;" he was a fatalist, who had got his chance. France, in fact, was waiting for the *régime* of a Bonaparte; the political power had been transferred from the middle class to the peasants, and the peasants were dominated by two passions, the hatred of feudalism and the love of order; the name of Napoleon was a guarantee of both, and if it was associated also with the conscription, that was forgotten for the moment, or merged in a vague reminiscence of glory; peace and prosperity was Bonaparte's programme, and for peace and prosperity the peasants voted: Legitimists and Orleanists threw their influence in the same direction; anything was better than a Republic, even a second Empire: as to the Republicans they were a minority confined to the great towns, and comparatively few as they were, they were divided among themselves; they brought four candidates into the field against the single name of Bonaparte and all the conservatism of France: the result could not be doubtful; Louis Bonaparte was returned at the head of the poll with between five and six million votes; the total Republican vote was under two million, and Lamartine, who had been returned by ten departments to the Constituent Assembly received for the Presidency a vote of only 18,000.

§ 4. The President.

The first stage to the Empire was accomplished, and the President solemnly took his oath to the Republic; he even added a commentary; "the votes of the nation," he said, "and the oath which I have just taken, control my future conduct. My duty is clear; I will fulfil it as a man of honour. I shall regard as enemies of the country all those who endeavour to change by illegal means that which France has established."

Three years elapsed between the taking of the oath to the Republic and the *coup d'état* that ushered in the Empire. The policy of the President, in the interim, was to keep himself constantly before the country, by progresses and public functions, posing always as the champion of order and the friend of the labouring classes; an extract from one of his speeches will be sufficient to indicate the character of them all:—"I seek with pleasure all opportunities which may bring me into contact with this great and generous people which has elected me; for, believe me, my sincerest and most devoted friends are not in the palace, but under the thatch, not under cloth of gold, but in the workshop and the field. I feel, as the Emperor said, that my fibre responds to yours, and that we have the same interests, the same instincts."

While thus representing himself as the advocate of

the solid interests of the people, the President was careful to assert his devotion to the Republican constitution:—"rumours of a *coup d'état* have perhaps reached you, gentlemen, but you have not believed them; I thank you for it. Surprises and usurpations may be the dream of parties without support in the nation; but the elect of 6,000,000 votes executes the will of the people, he does not betray it." "I have respected and shall respect the sovereignty of the people, even in what may be false and hostile to myself in its expression. If I have acted thus, it is because the title I covet most is that of an honest man. I know nothing above duty."

§ 5. The National Assembly. Revolution and Reaction.

Such was the attitude, simple, intelligible and apparently frank, which the President opposed to a chaos of impotent factions: elected in the May of 1849 the Assembly contained a majority of Monarchists and a minority of Republicans: the Monarchists were divided into Legitimists, Orleanists, and a small number of Bonapartists; the Republicans into "Moderates" and "Social Democrats," of whom the latter, the more numerous, represented a combination of Socialists and of extreme Republicans of the type of Ledru-Rollin. Of all these parties that of the moderate Republicans was the only one which could even pretend to be honestly attached to the Constitution:

the majority wanted a monarchical restoration, but would never be able to agree on their candidate; the Social Democrats wanted a more democratic Republic, and to secure it they were prepared, if necessary, to make appeal to force: to them the Republic, as they conceived it, was an ultimate and indefeasible right, of which the majority had no power to divest the sovereign nation: "the Republic," said Delescluze, "is above parliamentary majorities and even above universal suffrage; if 10,000,000 citizens were to vote against the Republic and for the Monarchy, the minority, though it consisted only of a single individual, would still have right on its side and would be bound to protest against the violence of which it would be the victim. From the point of view of principle, nothing but the Republic is possible. There is the right divine."

This theory was in direct contradiction to the first article of the Republican Constitution, which stated that "the sovereignty resides in the whole body of citizens; no individual, no fraction of the people, can pretend to its exclusive exercise:" but unfortunately the "whole body of citizens" had just returned a majority of Monarchists, that is to say, a majority pledged to destroy the Constitution under which their sovereignty was guaranteed, and the whole situation was thus a tangle which only force could resolve. It was the Democrats who first took action: their immediate excuse was the despatch of troops by the

Assembly to defend the Pope against the Republican insurrection in Rome: the measure in question was a violation of one of the articles of the Constitution, and it was determined to resist it by force; the people were to invade the Assembly, as on May 15th, "to declare that the Executive has forfeited its power; to declare the majority accomplice of the violation of the Constitution; to reduce the Assembly to those members who had sat in the Constituent, and to proclaim it *en permanence*." The attempt, which was made upon June 13, was frustrated by the intervention of the troops, and served only to embitter the opposition of the majority to the Republic: unable to agree upon the construction of what should be, the Monarchists were at one in their hatred of what was; they united to undo what the Provisional Government had done, renewed the restrictions on the press and on public meeting, suppressed the clubs, and finally, by the law of May 31, 1850, repudiated the principle of universal suffrage by disfranchising some three million electors. The position was a curious one; universal suffrage under a Republican Constitution had returned a majority of Monarchists to disfranchise the electors they were supposed to represent: "the more I see of the representatives of the people," wrote Lamartine, "the more I love my dogs."

§ 6. The Conflict between the Powers. The Revision of the Constitution.

The law of May 1850 was directed not only against the revolutionary democrats but against the President; for he was the elect of universal suffrage, and it was in the name of the people that he was preparing to overthrow the Assembly. The recess of 1850 defined the position of parties; Thiers and Broglie visited the Orleanist princes at Claremont, the Legitimists made a pilgrimage to "Henri V." at Wiesbaden, while the President, in his progress through the country, began already to hint at the Empire; at Cherbourg, for example, after referring to the demands which he encountered for works of public utility, he let fall the following significant words: "nothing is more natural than the manifestation of these wishes; believe me, they do not fall upon an inattentive ear; but, in my turn, I must tell you, these results, so keenly desired, can only be obtained if you give me the means to accomplish them, and those means consist entirely in your own co-operation to strengthen the Executive and guard against the dangers of the future." On his return to Paris he held a review of the troops at Satory, and was greeted more than once with cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" The conflict was defining itself: on the one hand was the President, crowned by the aureole of the first Napoleon, and making his appeal at once to the sentiment and

the solid interests of the nation; on the other an Assembly divided into parties of reaction and revolution, and united only in its opposition to the single power that seemed capable of ensuring a firm and consistent government. Already defined before the country, this conflict was not slow to reveal itself in the Chamber: Changarnier, general of the troops and the National Guards of Paris, was dismissed from his command at the beginning of 1851; he was regarded by the Assembly as their champion, and had just been honoured by a vote of confidence; his dismissal accordingly provoked an attack on the President and his Ministers, and in the course of the debate Thiers made use of the following words: "the movement of opinion is towards the executive authority; in face of him there is nothing but the Assembly, which has only a moral force; if it gives way, it is lost, it disappears; nothing remains but the Executive: after the fact, the word may come when it will; the Empire is made!"

The Changarnier episode was a preliminary warning; but the great issue to be faced was that of the revision of the Constitution: it so happened that the powers both of the President and of the Assembly expired in the month of May 1852; something, it was felt, must be done to avoid the crisis that would ensue: the President would have been content with a prorogation of his powers, which was forbidden by the Constitution as it stood, and the prefects were instructed to encourage petitions in this sense; but the

Monarchist desired a revision which would favour their own views: the Legitimists, accordingly, proposed that a Constituent Assembly should be summoned to "declare" the fundamental laws of the kingdom; to declare, but not to create them, "for they are eternal, and an Assembly can do no more than state them:" a revision in this sense would of course be opposed by every other party; the Orleanists wished to retain the law of May 31, and re-establish the constitutional monarchy based on the middle classes; the Democrats, to return to universal suffrage, and government by the "delegates" of the people, with a president popularly elected and removable at any moment: under such conditions it was clear that it would be difficult to secure the majority of three-fourths that was necessary to carry a motion of revision; and, in fact, the proposal was thrown out by a combination of the Republicans and a section of the Orleanists. Thus the country was left face to face with the crisis of May; Legitimists, Orleanists, Bonapartists, Moderates, Democrats—the field was open to all; and the question really was, not which had the legal right, but which had the force and decision, to convert their claims into facts.

"If," wrote the Spanish Ambassaor, "there could be anything absolutely new under the sun, it would be the spectacle which France offers to the world to-day. It is filled with Monarchists who cannot establish a Monarchy, and who groan under the weight of a Republic which has no Republicans to defend it.

In the midst of this confusion, only two personages remain standing, Louis Napoleon and the Mountain, two things only are possible, a new Revolution or a Dictatorship. It is evident to me that force must bring about a solution."

§ 7. Preliminaries of the Coup d'État.

In such a contest there could be little doubt where the victory would lie: the President was the one power that could claim to represent the whole country; the Assembly reproduced the divisions of the nation, he stood for its unity; if there were any right it was his, and his also was the force; he controlled the Administration and he controlled the army, that is to say, he controlled France; the other Monarchical claimants were abroad, he was at home and at the centre of affairs; they were discredited by their dependence on the old noblesse or the bourgeoisie, he professed himself the champion of democracy and the future: so strong did he feel his position to be that he almost abandoned his mask: "if my Government," he said at Dijon, "has not been able to realise all the ameliorations it had in view, the blame must be laid upon the manœuvres of factions. For three years it has been noticeable that I have always been seconded by the Assembly when the issue has been to combat disorder by measures of compression. But when I have wished to do good, to ameliorate the lot of the people, the Assembly has refused me

its assistance. If France recognises that no one has had the right to dispose of her without her own consent, she has only to say so; my courage and my energy will not fail her." But the President did not intend to wait for the mandate of France, which indeed, since the law had restricted the franchise, she was not in a position to give him; he was determined to act first and to apply for the sanction afterwards; and as though to facilitate his project the Assembly deliberately disarmed itself: its right to requisition troops directly for its own support had been questioned, and a motion was proposed to put the matter beyond all dispute; but the Republicans were unwilling to arm a reactionary Assembly, or to admit that it was possible that the troops should act against the representatives of the people:—"you fear the army!" said Crémieux, "the soldiers love the Republic! They will rise as one man against one who should dare to say to them: follow me against the Assembly!" "we have an invisible sentinel who guards us, it is the people," said Michel: to the people, accordingly, the matter was left; the motion was rejected, and the Assembly left defenceless against any enterprise.

§ 8. The Coup d'État.

The President had now no reason for hesitation; he determined, in his own phrase, "to issue from legality in order to return into right." He had

already made his arrangements; the troops and the police had been put under the command of men he could trust: all had been organised and planned with the minutest accuracy; and the night of December 1 was selected for the execution. Before the morning of the 2nd seventy-eight of the prominent civil and military leaders in Paris, including eighteen Deputies, had been arrested in their beds and quietly transferred to Mazas; the Chamber of Deputies was guarded by troops, all journals were suppressed, and placards appeared in every prominent place announcing the dissolution of the Assembly, the establishment of a new Government, and an immediate appeal to the people for the ratification of the change. On the morning of the 2nd, the Deputies found themselves excluded from their hall of debate; some of them, who managed to enter by a side door, were met by their President with the discouraging words:—"gentlemen, it is evident that the Constitution is being violated; night is with us, but, not being the stronger party, I invite you to withdraw; I have the honour to wish you good-day." The indignation of the Deputies was cut short by their expulsion by the troops; they adjourned to the 10th mairie, and proceeded to the impeachment of the President and his Ministers, but were again interrupted by the troops—the troops who "love the Republic, and will rise as one man against one who should dare to say to them: follow me against the Assembly"—and the majority of them arrested, and conducted to prison through the

midst of a sullen and apparently unsympathising crowd. Hitherto there had been no street fighting; but on the 3rd, barricades were raised, and at one of them, Baudin, a deputy, was shot. On the 4th the situation was more serious; it was on that day that occurred what is described as the "massacre" on the boulevards: the troops had been for hours inactive under arms; it is said that they had been plied with drink; and a shot from one of the houses was the occasion of a general and perhaps unpremeditated fusillade in which the crowd of spectators was involved: the number of bystanders killed or wounded is variously estimated by opponents or apologists of the *coup d'état*. Throughout the area of resistance the barricades were carried by the troops with more or less slaughter; but the mass of the population did not rise, and the official return gives the total number killed on both sides as something little over two hundred: the accuracy of this return may be doubted; numerous prisoners were made, and it was believed at the time, and has been constantly asserted since, that they were shot by hundreds at night without trial; it is certain that many, on charges which were bound under the circumstances to be vague and unsifted, were sentenced to transportation or banishment; and the measures which were originated at Paris were continued throughout the provinces: the departments which it was supposed might be likely to resist were put under martial law, that is to say, their inhabitants were made liable to "slaughter, banishment, imprisonment

and sequestration" at the decree of a military tribunal; and it was further decreed that to be a member of a secret society should be regarded *per se* as an offence punishable by transportation: now, transportation meant Cayenne; and it is said that the number of persons thus dealt with was over 25,000.

Such, in brief, is the history of the *coup d'état;* the accounts of it are so conflicting that it appears to be impossible to sift the truth; but it is important to remember that the worst that is related, whether or no it was true, was believed, and that the Empire at the moment of its origin was already condemned by the conscience of France.

Three years had passed since the President took the oath to the Republic; and scarcely more than one since he had publicly said at Tours: "Trust in the future without thinking of *coups d'état* or insurrections; for *coups d'état* there is no excuse."

§ 9. The Plébiscite.

On December 20 the President appealed to the country; he asked for a confirmation of his act of violence and of the authority he had already assumed; the nation was to answer "yes" or "no," that is to say, was either to accept the only Government that remained standing, or was to fling itself deliberately back into the anarchy of parties and passions. "To vote for Louis Napoleon," said Montalembert in a public manifesto, "is not to approve all he has done; it is

only to choose between him and the total ruin of France: it does not mean that his Government is the one we prefer above all others; it means simply that we prefer a prince who has given proof of resolution and ability, to those who are at this moment giving their proofs of murder and pillage." This opposition of the President who posed as the champion of order to the Socialists who were attempting a democratic revolution in the provinces, was put still more clearly in the proclamation of one of the prefects:—"yes, is life; no, death bysuicide: there is the alternative; choose." By the mere force of the situation, such a vote could hardly be free: but, further, the terror of the *coup d'état* was still weighing on the country; thirty-two departments were under martial law; it was impossible for opposition to be organised by meetings or through the press; the army voted first and gave the cue to the country, and how freely the army voted may be conjectured from an address delivered by a colonel to a corporal who had the audacity to propose to say "no;" the words, though they rest upon hearsay, have a sufficient appearance of authenticity to deserve quotation:—"what! you who are reported for promotion and will be nominated to the first vacancy, you formally disobey your colonel, and that in presence of your company! if only your refusal were no more than an act of insubordination! then it might pass! but no! are you aware, sir, that by this vote of yours you are invoking the destruction of the army, the conflagration of your father's house,

the utter annihilation of society? what! you whom I intended to promote! are these the intentions you avow to my very face!"

Such being the circumstances the result of the *plébiscite* could hardly be doubtful; the President was confirmed in his power by 7½ million votes, and an even greater number were cast to approve his assumption of the title of Emperor, in the November of 1852: the prophecy of Thiers was fulfilled; "l'empire était fait."

§ 10. Conclusion.

The Republic of 1848, like that of 1793, was the attempt of a small minority to force their creed upon France; the result, in both cases, was anarchy, passing by reaction into despotism: at neither date was the country ripe to receive the ideal of the Revolution, which was therefore destroyed in the very act of realisation: for the Democrats and Socialists of 1848, like the Jacobins of 1793, did not hesitate to attempt to coerce the nation in the name of the Republic; the commissioners of Ledru-Rollin were the modern representatives of those of the Convention, and May 15 and June 13, 1848, 9 the correspondents to June 2, 1793: the measures and the issue were different, but the principle was the same; it was that which was formulated by the Democrats themselves—the Republic is above universal suffrage. But the opposition which met the modern Jacobins was very different to

that which had been faced by their predecessors; the Royalists of the Second Republic were not gathered in arms on the frontier backed by the forces of Austria, they sat in the Chamber of Deputies, and formed the majority there; a majority however which was split into three irreconcilable parties, impotent therefore for positive measures and powerful only to negate: the result was an anarchy none the less real that it was concealed under constitutional forms; every one was waiting for an opportunity to destroy the Republic which every one had sworn to defend; there was no constitutional settlement possible because it was the constitution itself that was at issue; the Republic which had been founded by violence, violence was bound to destroy, and February 24 already contained in germ December 2: it follows that the *coup d'état* was no gratuitous and isolated crime; it was a part of the chain of fatality of which the Revolution had riveted the first link, as inevitable as that of Brumaire, and as much or as little to be justified; it was the Nemesis of 1848, as 1870 was the Nemesis of it: the Furies were on the track of France, and twenty years had yet to pass before it could be hoped that the Erinyes of this modern Atreides were at length appeased.

But if the Republic of 1848 may thus be regarded, in its political aspect, as a paler reflex of 1793, there is another and more important point of view which reveals in it a new and distinguishing significance: 1848 was the revolution of Socialism: the attack

upon property which had been rather an accident than an aim of 1793 was the deliberate purpose and policy of the modern Jacobins; imperfect in their knowledge, vague in their theories, personal and partial in their desires, they stated in revolutionary action the problem that underlies and gives point to the political movement of the century: the "live working or die fighting" of the Lyons strike of 1831 was echoed by the "bread or lead" of the days of June; poverty had challenged wealth, and the cause which had long been the occupation of thinkers and individual reformers had embodied itself in more aggressive form as a party of political revolution: this manifestation, however, was premature; everything was expected and nothing prepared; the only definite scheme proposed was that of Louis Blanc, and how inadequate this would have proved to achieve the instantaneous transformation he anticipated is proved by the whole history of industrial co-operation: a problem which must tax for generations the willing activities of every class and every talent had been posed by a minority for instant solution at a crisis of disintegration, suspicion and fear; but there was not then, as there is not now, a "Morrison's pill" to meet the case; to remodel society in a moment of revolution was the illusion of 1848, the fact was the national workshops, the Luxembourg, and the days of June.

CHAPTER VII

THE SECOND EMPIRE

L. GRÉGOIRE. "Histoire de la France."
TAXILE DELORD. "Histoire du Second Empire."
BLANCHARD JERROLD. "Life of Napoleon III."
JULES FERRY. "La Lutte Électorale en 1863."
W. N. SENIOR. "Conversations with Distinguished Persons during the Second Empire."
K. HILLEBRAND. "France and the French in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century."
VILLETARD. "Histoire de l'Internationale."
J. RAE. "Contemporary Socialism."
W. F. DAWSON. "German Socialism."
Articles on the "International" by Professor BEESLY in the *Fortnightly Review* of 1870, and by Mr. HOWELL in the *Nineteenth Century* of 1878.
Œuvres de Napoléon III."

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CHAPTER VII

THE SECOND EMPIRE

§ 1. The Emperor's Theory of the Empire

The *coup d'état* of December was not merely the act of a vulgar adventurer, aiming at power for the sake of power without consideration of public ends. Louis Bonaparte had for years been forming his mind and shaping his ideal on the life and works of the first Napoleon; as early as 1840 he had published his "Idées Napoléoniennes," a work which is at once a tribute to the First, and an advertisement of the Second Empire: in it, after celebrating the Emperor as the preserver, and founder in practice, of the ideas of the Revolution, he proceeds to describe what he believes would have been the conclusion and crown of his labours; after consolidating order and legal equality, by means of despotism, Napoleon, it seems, would have proceeded, in the fulness of time, to establish liberty, by removing the restrictions on the press, conferring on the Chambers a genuine legislative power, and permitting their

members to be elected directly and freely by universal suffrage: the centralised despotism was a temporary expedient necessary to the creation of solid institutions; once this end was attained, the political system that facilitated it would have done its work; France would have passed through her period of tutelage, and be fit to receive the full control of the estate that her guardian meantime had been organising and practically recreating. The first Napoleon, as he was thus interpreted, had utilised the ancient traditions of centralisation to organise the anarchy of the moment in the interest of the revolutionary ideal; and such, according to his nephew, must be the character of every sound policy—"the pact which binds the various members of a society must derive its form from the past, its facts from the present, its spirit from the future of that society:" applying this maxim to his own circumstances and time he arrived at the conclusion that the only way to save the present and develop the future was to re-establish the Empire: the Restoration had failed because its spirit as well as its form was that of the past; the Monarchy of July because it had existed for the present, without tradition and without ideal; the Republic because, in its zeal for the future, it had ignored both the present and the past; the Empire alone represented the reconciliation of order and progress, the tradition of the past, the facts of the present, and the inspiration of the future. But it would not be sufficient simply to restore what the first Napoleon had established;

forty years had modified both circumstances and men; the nation had become accustomed to Parliamentary liberties, it was tormented and perplexed by new industrial and social problems, above all it was no longer aggressive in arms against the coalition of Europe: it followed that the policy of the third Napoleon must be peace and industrial progress, and ultimately an extension of political liberty in accordance with the modern democratic ideals. It was not, then, as a military despotism that Napoleon III. conceived the Empire; rather, the Emperor was the elect of the people, a democratic chief, appointed by the unity of France to control and harmonise her divisions: the Restoration had been the Government of the nobles, the Monarchy of July, of the middle class; he alone represented the nation as a whole: the *plébiscites* to which he had recourse were a reality to Louis Napoleon; he regarded them as conferring on his government a legitimacy which could be claimed by no other *régime* since that of the First Empire; it was in the name of the people that he had suppressed the Republic, in their name that he established his own authority, and in their name that he transformed it, in the end, into that of a constitutional monarch.

Such was the conception the Emperor had formed of his own position and duties; he was there by the mandate of the nation to establish the State in order and "crown" it with liberty, to maintain peace, ensure progress, and guard against Utopian revolution: such is the view and such the programme

he developed in a speech of October 1852, just before the final establishment of the Empire:—"I say it with a frankness as far removed from pride as from false modesty, never has a people displayed in a manner more direct, more spontaneous and more unanimous, its readiness to set itself free from all the pre-occupations of the future, by consolidating in a single hand a power with which it feels itself in sympathy. The reason is, that it recognises to-day how delusive were the hopes with which it was lulled, how real the dangers with which it was threatened. It knows that in 1852 society was rushing to its ruin, because every party was consoling itself beforehand for the universal shipwreck by the hope of planting its flag on any *débris* that might float on the surface. It was grateful to me for saving the vessel by flying only the flag of France. Disabused of absurd theories, the people has acquired the conviction that the pretended reformers were nothing but dreamers, for there was always inconsequence and disproportion between their means and the promised results. To-day France surrounds me with her sympathies, because I do not belong to the family of ideologists. To forward the welfare of the country, it is not necessary to apply new systems; but to give, above all, confidence in the present, security for the future. That is how France seems to wish to return to the Empire.

"Nevertheless there is a fear to which I ought to reply. In a spirit of mistrust certain people say: the Empire is war. I say: the Empire is peace. . . . .

I confess, however, that I, like the Emperor, have many conquests to make. I wish, like him, to conquer to reconciliation the dissident parties, and to turn back again into the stream of the great popular river those hostile side currents which are on the way to lose themselves without profit to any one. I wish to conquer to religion, to morality, to prosperity, that part of the population, still so numerous, which, in the midst of a country of faith and belief, scarcely know the precepts of Christ, which, in the heart of the most fertile country in the world, can scarcely enjoy the prime necessities of its produce. We have immense districts of virgin soil to clear, roads to open, harbours to dig, rivers to render navigable, canals to finish, our network of railways to complete. We have, opposite Marseilles, a vast kingdom to assimilate to France. We have all our great ports of the West to bring near to the American continent, by the rapidity of the communications we have yet to create. We have everywhere ruins to restore, false gods to overthrow, truths to establish in triumph. That is how I should understand the Empire, if the Empire is to be re-established. Such are the conquests that I meditate, and all of you who surround me, who desire, like myself, the welfare of our country, you are my soldiers."

This speech may be regarded as the manifesto of the Empire; it is not merely an improvisation of expediency, it is the expression of deliberate convictions founded on long reflection and study: to put himself

in a position to realise his programme the President had not shrunk from the *coup d'état*, and it is from the standpoint of that programme that his work may be most conveniently examined.

§ 2. The Political Institutions of 1852.

The political institutions established in 1852 were copied directly from those of the first Empire. The President, afterwards Emperor, had the control of peace and war, the nomination of all officials, including the Ministers and the Council of State, and the exclusive right to initiate legislation, and summon, prorogue or dissolve the legislative body; he was regarded as the elect of the people, and as responsible to them; the Ministers were his Ministers, not those of the Representative Assembly; legislation, as well as administration, depended directly upon him; he was, like the first Napoleon, in the fullest and most absolute sense the Head of the State.

The Legislative Body was elected by universal suffrage for a maximum period of six years; its function was to discuss, and adopt or reject, the laws submitted to it by the Ministers, but it had no power of amendment except by permission of the Council of State.

The Senate was composed of cardinals, marshals, admirals, and others whom the President might select; its functions were to watch over the Constitution, interpret it where it was ambiguous, and supplement it where it was defective.

Such was the Constitution that was approved by the *plébiscites* of 1851 and 1852, that is to say by the same voters who less than four years before had returned a majority of Legitimists and Orleanists to lay the foundations of a Republic: it is possible that the approval was genuine, in spite of the circumstances under which it was given, and probable that Napoleon believed it to be so: when he informed the nation that "the chief you have elected is responsible before you; that he has always the right to appeal to your sovereign judgment, in order that, on solemn occasions, you may be able to continue or withdraw your confidence"—there is no sufficient reason to suppose that he was deliberately announcing a fraud; as he believed in his own mission, so he believed in its acceptance by the nation; and he gave further proof of his good faith by appealing to them again in 1870: nevertheless, the fact remains that there was not and could not be an adequate means of establishing this responsibility to the people; to ask for a vote in favour of a Constitution when there is no alternative but anarchy, is not to offer a free choice; for in such a case it is not a policy, but society itself that is at stake, and to answer "no," may be as disastrous as, at best, it is ineffective and puerile.

§ 3. The Later Modifications of the Constitution.

Yet that it was not the intention of Napoleon to establish a despotism while he called it a democratic

monarchy, is shown by his deliberate modifications of the Constitution of 1852 : " I was the first," he said, in 1869, " to wish for a more rigorous control by the public of State affairs ; with this view I increased the power of the deliberative assemblies, being persuaded that the real strength of a Government lies in the independence and patriotism of the great bodies of the State." Originally, as we have seen, the power of the Legislative Body was limited to voting and rejecting as a whole the laws submitted to it by the Executive; there was no such thing as criticism or control of the general policy of the reign : but the year 1860 opened a period of development in the direction of liberty ; by a decree of the November of that year the Emperor permitted the Deputies to draw up an address in answer to his speech, giving them thereby the opportunity to criticise his policy; by that of December 1861 he allowed them to vote the budget by sections, that is to say, to discuss and, if desirable, reject its items ; by that of January 1867 he substituted for the Address the right of questioning the Ministers, who might be delegated to the Chamber by the Emperor to take part in certain definite discussions ; lastly, by that of September 1869 he gave to the Legislative Body the right of initiating laws, removed the restrictions hitherto retained on the right of amendment and of questions, and made the Ministers responsible to the Chamber. Thus the Constitution was deliberately modified, by the initiative of the Emperor himself, from the form of imperial

despotism to that of parliamentary monarchy: this modified Constitution was submitted to a *plébiscite* in May 1870, and once more the people ratified the Empire by over seven million votes against a million and a half; the edifice had been "crowned with liberty," the nation had given its approval; "more than ever," said the Emperor, "may we face the future without fear": within four months followed the battle of Sedan.

§ 4. The Local Administration.

Faithful, then, to his leading idea of progress based on Conservatism, the Emperor had fairly endeavoured to reconcile his popular dictatorship with liberty: the same tendency was shown in his treatment of the question of centralisation; "how can it be tolerated," he wrote in 1863, "that an unobjectionable communal affair of minor importance should entail formalities stretching over two years at least, in consequence of the routine which passes it into the hands of eleven different authorities?" The problem created by the first Napoleon was felt and faced by his successor: he transferred to the prefects the decision on various points which had hitherto been reserved for the Minister or the Council of State, and in his speech of 1869 suggested other reforms, especially the restriction of his choice of the mayors to members of the elected councils, and the formation of cantonal assemblies to give direction and organisation to the

isolated efforts of the communes: if little was actually done, it is clear that the cause was not indifference on the part of the Emperor; here, as in the larger question of the powers of the Senate and the legislative body, he showed himself sincerely anxious to reconcile order with liberty.

§ 5. Social and Economic Reforms.

Hitherto we have considered the policy of the Emperor only in its relation to the machinery of government; but its more important side is that of administration, for it is here that his promises had been most definite and profuse: these promises it cannot be said that he failed altogether to fulfil, though it was impossible that he should satisfy all the expectations he had raised: he devoted much of his attention to the encouragement of industry, established model farms, reclaimed waste lands, developed means of communication, rebuilt Paris, opened special credits for agriculture and commerce, organised public exhibitions of the products of the world, and last, but not least, from the English point of view, concluded with Great Britain the commercial treaty of 1860, which was a deliberate advance in the direction of free trade: nor was he indifferent to the more special interests of the working-class; by a law of 1864 he legalised combinations of labourers; he organised free law for the poor, opened free parks, developed schemes of insurance for old age and accident, and encouraged

provident and co-operative societies: rigorously opposed to Socialism, which was identified with the dreaded *spectre rouge*, he was none the less constantly occupied with the social problem; "*cherchez, cherchez!*" was his motto; and he probably accomplished more in the direction of positive amelioration than had been achieved by any of the Governments that had succeeded one another since 1789.

§ 6. Foreign Policy.

So far, then, as internal administration was concerned, the Emperor was faithful to his programme; but there was another side of it which he signally failed to fulfil: "the Empire," he had said, "is peace;" as a matter of fact it was war; war unprofitable in the Crimea, war hypocritical in Italy, war disgraceful in Mexico, war catastrophic at Sedan: with the causes and history of these events we are not at present concerned; but they must be noted as elements that contributed their share to the bitterness of the opposition.

§ 7. Repression and Control.

That opposition was implicit in the very events from which the Government had sprung; founded on force it could not dispense with force for its maintenance; the proscriptions of the *coup d'état* were renewed by the law of 1858; the press, until 1868,

was subjected to severe restrictions; the parliamentary institutions, until 1860, were little better than a farce; and the elections to the legislative body, throughout the reign, were controlled by an administrative pressure more shameless and more effective than that which had been exercised even under the Monarchy of July.

The law of 1858 was provoked by the attempt of Orsini to assassinate the Emperor; it punished by sequestration or banishment every provocation to attack on the Government, whether or no it was followed by action, and every "manœuvre or communication," at home or abroad, entered upon with the design of troubling the public peace or inciting to hatred or contempt of the authorities: how such a law might work in practice is illustrated by the following anecdote from Senior, which is curious enough to deserve quotation:—"Admiral Barbier-Tinant has a brother or a cousin of the same name, an engineer in one of the Channel ports, I believe Rochelle. He has large docks and employs a numerous body of workmen. One of his foremen was arrested. Barbier-Tinant went in great alarm to the prefect. 'You have taken from me,' he said, 'my right-hand man, a man absolutely necessary to me, and so far from being dangerous, that he does not even think about politics.' 'I did not act,' said the prefect, 'without grounds.' He sent for the man's 'dossier,' and showed to Barbier-Tinant a letter denouncing the

foreman as a rouge. 'I know,' said Barbier-Tinant, 'the handwriting. The writer is a man who was in my employment, was detected by my foreman in robbing me, and is now in prison for the theft.' The prefect of course was horror-struck. 'The affair,' he said, 'has passed out of my hands. The man is at Havre, on his way to Cayenne, but I will write to Espinasse and obtain his release.' Espinasse's answer was, 'Nous ne revenons pas sur nos pas, c'est une affaire finie. Il faut qu'il parte.' And the poor man is now at Cayenne."

Of the administrative pressure on the elections something has been said in a previous chapter; under the Empire it was the more necessary and the more stringent that it was applied under the conditions of universal suffrage: the methods employed were the manipulation of the electoral divisions and of the lists of electors, the recommendation of Government candidates by the prefects and the mayors, the support of journals favourable to the Government and the control of those hostile, the requisition of the votes of all officials, down to the navvies on the public roads, the mutilation of the placards of opposition candidates, and the confiscation of their manifestoes in the post. The system of Government candidates is thus explained by the prefect of the Haute-Loire:—"we administrators, without personal interest in the question, and representing simply the sum total of your interests, examine, appreciate and judge the various candidates, and after a ripe examination, with the approval of

the Government, we present to you the one who appears to us the best and who unites most sympathies, not as the result of our own will or caprice, but as the expression of your votes and the result of your sympathies." It is easy to see what abuses might be covered by this plausible plea, and the point may be rendered more clear by quotation from the official circulars: "the mayor of the commune of S—— has the honour to invite the electors of the commune to meet at the mairie on Sunday the 31st instant, or Monday the 1st of June, bringing their cards and voting-ticket, to re-elect M. Segris, deputy, who has fairly earned their confidence." "If the Government is to be asked to assist the commune in building its new school, the Commune must show by this election that it is worthy of the assistance of the Government."

§ 8. The Opposition.

The law of 1858 and the systematic manipulation of the elections were a lamentable comment on the liberal tendencies of the Emperor, and it was not surprising that the parties he had mated by the *coup d'état* should see in him nothing but an adventurer, sustaining by coercion tempered with hypocrisy the position he had won by crime: his concessions to liberty were derided even while they were turned to account for his ruin; by the policy inaugurated in 1860 he had deliberately divested himself of his independence of factions in the Chamber, and as the

immediate result, he was hampered and perplexed by an opposition not merely progressive but revolutionary in its aims: almost from the beginning of the reign, in spite of the pressure brought to bear on the electors, a small number of Liberals had been returned to the Legislative Body, and by 1869 they had increased to over 100: among them, in addition to those whose more moderate aim was to continue the constitutional development of the Empire, there was also an irreconcilable faction bent upon its overthrow; with the former the Emperor identified himself by appointing their leader, Emile Ollivier, Minister in 1870; with the latter there could be no pact and no truce: they signalised themselves in the Chamber, in the Press, in the courts of justice, by attacks not merely on the policy but on the existence of the imperial *régime:* in 1868 H. Rochefort started the *Lanterne*, the most scurrilous and implacable of the opposition journals; the same year occurred the famous *procès Baudin*, which offered an opportunity for reviving in public the bitter memories of the *coup d'état:* the origin of the trial was a meeting of democrats at the tomb of Baudin, the deputy who had been shot on a barricade on the 3rd of December 1851; the meeting was followed by a subscription to raise a monument in honour of the victim, and those concerned in the movement were prosecuted by the Government: the occasion was utilised by the defenders of the accused for a political manifestation; Gambetta was one of the advocates, and his speech had a wide notoriety;

one passage, especially, was a direct defiance to the Empire :—"all the Governments," he said, "which have reigned in succession in this country, have taken pride in the day that gave them birth. They have fêted the 14th July, the 10th August; the days of July 1830 have been fêted too, and so has the 24th February; there are only two anniversaries, the 18th Brumaire and the 2nd December, which it has never been proposed to celebrate, because you well know that if you made the attempt it would be repudiated by the public conscience. Well! this anniversary that you have rejected, it is we who claim it, we who take it to ourselves; we will celebrate it always, always without intermission; every year it shall be the anniversary of our dead, until the day when the country, become master in its turn, shall impose upon you the great national expiation in the name of liberty, equality, fraternity."

The author of this speech was returned to the Chamber in 1869; a few months later Rochefort was elected for Belleville, in the capacity of "montagnard" democrat and Socialist. There could be no more significant indication of the state of opinion in Paris and in the larger towns: everything, indeed, was against the Empire; its origin in force and treachery, involving the reprobation of honest men and the deathless hostility of the thousands who were affected by its proscriptions; its liberal evolution, unchaining an opposition it was impotent to appease; the cynical contempt for every Government engendered

by a series of revolutions—that "egotism, scepticism, indifference," which, according to the sentence of Renan, had "dried up the heart of the country"; lastly, the disappointment of all who had formed exaggerated hopes of the new *régime*, and in particular of the clergy and the working classes.

§ 9. The Empire and the Church.

The clergy had greeted with enthusiasm the advent of the Empire; the first Napoleon had re-established the Catholic Church, the third, it might be hoped, would incline to the restoration of its ancient privileges: already the law of 1850 had established that liberty of education which was so passionately claimed by the clergy under the Monarchy of July, and the immediate result had been the multiplication of Jesuit colleges: this however was but a slender instalment of what was claimed by the increasingly powerful Ultramontanes; they aimed at the revision, or even abolition of the organic articles and the Concordat, and the recognition of the Church as a State within the State, dependent only upon Rome: at first it appeared that the Emperor might be inclined to favour their designs; during the earlier part of the reign there was harmony between Church and State, and the Government did not hesitate to publish the Bull announcing the Immaculate Conception: it was the events of 1859 that destroyed this illusory pact; the independence of Italy destroyed

the civil power of the Pope, and instantly the attitude of the clergy towards the Emperor was changed; him of whom they had said, on the morrow of the *coup d'état*, "blessed be this man of God, for it is God that has raised him up," they apostrophised now as a Pilate, a Judas of the Church; "Petrus est in vinclis" sighed the Pope, in mingled sorrow and indignation, and the bishops of France took up the cry in various notes of passion: the syllabus of 1864 completed the rupture thus begun, for it was a condemnation not only in general of all the principles on which modern societies are based, of toleration, free thought, and exclusively secular instruction, but in particular of the relations established by law between the Church and State of France: the first Napoleon had created the Ultramontane Church; it was his successor who had to meet its open declaration of war.

§ 10. The Empire and Socialism.

But there was another opposition more formidable to the Government than that of the Church: the Emperor had presented himself to the country as the friend of the working man, and, as we have seen, he had done what he could to fulfil his pledges; but anything that a Government could do must seem small to men who believed it could do everything: the artisans of France were steeped in Utopian Socialism; if they had been bitterly disappointed by the Revolution of 1848 they were not less so by the

imperial *régime* of "order"; they had shed their blood for the Republic, they had given their votes for the Empire, and still they were caught and strangled in the meshes of the economic organisation they had hoped to cut away at a blow: it was in vain that the Emperor displayed at once his force and his ameliorative measures; Socialism, which he was pledged to suppress, could not be thus extinguished; on the contrary, it received from Germany a new precision and a new force.

§ 11. The Theory of Marx.

The movement inaugurated in Germany by Marx and by Lassalle was based on a profounder analysis, and issued in a more definite propaganda, than any that had hitherto been achieved or adopted in France: taking its origin from the philosophy of Hegel, it regarded the transformations of society as the result rather of "natural" evolution than of spontaneous and spasmodic human efforts; if the time was ripe for revolution, then revolution would come, by war, it might be, or, it might be, in peace, but whatever the means, it would come: such a moment of inevitable transformation had arrived for the societies of Europe: at the end of the eighteenth century the middle classes had conquered feudalism; together with the control of political power they had assumed the control of industry; they had dominated the forces of iron and steam, had bridged the seas and exploited

the continents; but in performing their mission they had prepared the way for a new revolution: 1789 was their avatar, 1848 would be known as that of the proletariat. The proletariat was the product at once and the solvent of the bourgeois system; that which had engendered it, it was bound by an irresistible law to destroy: no one was making the Socialist revolution; it was coming in the fatal course of events, and its ultimate arrival was merely a question of time. The argument on which this position is based may be stated, in its crudest form, as follows:—under the present system the means of production are owned by private individuals; the labourer, therefore, in order to produce the necessaries of his own existence, is obliged to apply to the capitalist for the material and the machinery he requires; these the capitalist supplies, but on his own terms; out of what is produced he returns to the labourer as wages the minimum on which he can live; all the rest he retains for himself as interest and profits: the more efficient are the means of production, the more will the labourer produce in a given time, but his own share of the product will remain fixed at the cost of his subsistence; all the increase above that point will go to the capitalist: it follows that by its natural evolution the system of private capital is constantly creating and setting face to face two distinct and irreconcilable classes,—on the one hand a minority of capitalists whose wealth increases with every increase of productive power, on the other a majority of labourers whose

earnings are fixed for ever at the limit of bare subsistence: such a process involves its own destruction: sooner or later the proletariat army will have become so numerous and strong that it will rise and put an end to the capitalist class and to the system of private property: but the revolution thus accomplished, unlike every other in history, will not be that of class against class, but of humanity against the existence of classes at all it was private property that created divisions, Socialism will end them; henceforth the means of production will be held in common, and as a result there will be one people, with one law and one retribution for all.

§ 12. The "International."

The theory thus briefly ontlined was admirably fitted to be the basis of a propaganda; it was simple, pitiless, revolutionary: its originator, as well as its most active disseminator, was Marx; already in 1847 he had drawn up the "Manifesto of the Communist League," in which, after summing up the historical and economic situation, he formulated the following programme for the leading nations of the West: the nationalisation of land and of the means of transport, the abolition of inheritance, the monopolisation of credit by a single national bank, the development of State factories and farms, compulsory labour for all, free education, and the abolition of children's labour in factories: to this programme was appended

the following significant sentence :—" the Communists do not seek to conceal their views and aims. They declare openly that their purpose can only be obtained by a violent overthrow of all the existing arrangements of society. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution. The proletariat have nothing to lose in it but their chains ; they have a world to win. Proletarians of all countries, unite ! "

The Communist League was the prelude to the " International " : the idea of this society was originated in the year 1862, when a deputation of French workmen visited the International Exhibition at London ; on August 5th a meeting was held, at which the English workmen read to their visitors an address recommending the union of the labourers of all countries :—" as long as there are masters and workmen, as long as there is competition among the masters and dispute about the rate of wages, so long will the union of the labourers among themselves be their only means of salvation. Concord among ourselves and among our masters is the only way to diminish the difficulties with which we are surrounded; we believe that by exchanging ideas and observations with the workmen of different nationalities we shall succeed in discovering more quickly the economic secrets of society." There is nothing Socialistic in this address ; nor was Socialism the immediate aim of the society to whose formation it contributed, and whose foundation dates from a meeting in St. Martin's Hall in 1864: it was there decided to form an " International Association," and

the provisional statutes then proposed were definitely adopted in 1866 at a Congress at Geneva; in the preface to these statutes it is stated that "the economical subjugation of the labourer to the possessor of the means of labour is the first cause of his political, moral and material servitude, and the economical emancipation of labour is consequently the great aim to which every political movement ought to be subordinated"; but there is no definition of the means by which this "economical emancipation" is to be achieved, nor of the particular organisation of society in which it will result. The "International," then, at its foundation was not a professedly Socialist society; but it was Marx who had been invited to draw up its statutes, it was he who from the first was its guiding spirit, and under his influence the society assumed by degrees a Socialist direction: thus at the Congress of 1867 it adopted the nationalisation of means of communication; at that of 1868 the nationalisation of land, mines, quarries, forests, and telegraphs; and, finally, in 1877, the complete Socialist programme of the ownership by the State of all the means of production. The "International" thus had a tendency in the Socialist direction; but primarily its object was the organisation of mutual assistance among the labourers of different countries: "the Association," says Professor Beesly, "never pretends to say what the conditions of labour should be in any place; but whenever a struggle has begun it aims at obtaining for the

workmen the co-operation of their fellows throughout Europe." Assistance of this kind to strikes of which the society might approve, and the spread of information on the social question by journals and discussions, was, in fact, the main official work of the Association: as to its strength, it is estimated that the maximum number of members, including those connected with it only indirectly through other societies, was no more than 18,000; and these, according to Mr. Howell, were united only by "a mere acquiescence in a few general and abstract principles, some of which were ill understood, and others so very commonplace that no one cared to dispute them:" the total number of direct individual adhesions between 1864 and 1870 was 294, of whom 172 were English or Irish; and the income of the society during the same period varied from £9 to £28 a year.

A society so limited in its resources and so vague in its methods and aims, could hardly have been a serious danger to the peace of "capitalist" Europe; but it is of the nature of an association so indeterminate and loose that it should exercise an indirect influence more extensive and more extreme than might be conjectured from its official records and utterances; and so it came about that in France, between 1868 and 1870, the International became a centre for the propaganda of revolutionary Socialism: trade societies, and others, were affiliated to it *en masse;* every strike swelled the tale of its members,

or rather of its floating associates; and its leaders at last identified themselves with the party of political revolution: at the beginning of 1870 the International was a constant pre-occupation of the Government, and its chiefs were calling on the electors to abstain or vote "no" in the plebiscite of May:—"never," cried one of them, "has the working class been willing to accept anything from the conqueror of France, whom it has always regarded as its most cruel enemy. . . . The 'International' has had to submit to the hard laws of necessity; it was silent till the day when it could say 'we will not have the Empire'; and now, for several years, that has been its loudest cry. . . . . We are bound to concern ourselves with politics, since on politics labour depends. Once for all the avowal must be made, we wish for the social Republic with all its consequences." The days of June 1848, the proscriptions of December 1851, the law of public safety 1858, had not sufficed to extinguish the party of revolutionary Socialism; on the eve of the fall of the Empire were revived, with an emphasis more bitter and more precise, the same passions and the same claims whose extinction had been the strongest pretext for the crime upon which it was based; the vague and Utopian theories of 1848 had been stiffened into formal rigidity by the implacable logic of Marx; the synthesis "humanity," was broken up into the antithesis "capitalist" and "proletariat;" and under this new flag the Social Democrats resumed their march, the Republic of Idealism behind

them, and the Commune and the days of May in front.

§ 13. The Situation in 1870.

Such was the general situation at the opening of the year 1870: the "edifice had been crowned" with liberty, and everywhere its foundations were giving way; it had won no new adherents and it was losing its old ones; Socialism had conquered the artisans, Ultramontanism the Church, and Legitimists and Orleanists held aloof, forming their own plans: apart from political parties the nation at large was contemptuous or indifferent; disillusioned of all its finer hopes, it had sought to forget them in play; pleasure and speculation had became its predominant interest, and the resulting discredit and ruin rebounded on the Government: advancing in years, tormented by disease, attacked at once by his ancient friends and by the opponents he had vainly hoped to reconcile, the Emperor looked out on the crumbling walls of the social fabric he had undertaken to "save:" "the Empire appears to be collapsing on every side," said Persigny in 1867; in 1870 the fact was still more fatally clear, and it scarcely needed the shock of war to disengage the imminent catastrophe.

§ 14. Conclusion.

The second Empire, like the first, went down before a foreign foe; Leipzig was echoed by Sedan; but

while the result of the earlier catastrophe was the re-imposition of the ancient Monarchy, the later one left the nation free to resume its Republican development: of that development the first Empire had been a progressive stage, for though it had established despotism, it had confirmed "equality;" the second was at best a halt, at worst a deviation: it secured, it is true, some twenty years of internal peace and prosperity, but it founded no institutions, solved no problems, reconciled no parties: the crisis it had smothered in 1851 revived, more ominous than before, in 1870; the battle between parties was yet to be fought, the practical compromise yet to be discovered, for everything had been postponed, while nothing at all had been settled. If then the Emperor was not an adventurer, his Government, at least, was an adventure; but an adventure for which every party in France was as much responsible as he: Monarchists, Republicans, Democrats, between them, had threatened the nation with anarchy, and the nation in panic had thrown itself into the arms of Napoleon III.: with the duplicity of means and the singleness of aim that characterises every fanatic, he had accepted what he believed to be a providential mission, and established it on violence and fraud: the promises he had made to the nation he had honestly endeavoured to fulfil; in his zeal to attach it to his system he had even destroyed the system itself, for with the personal supremacy of the Emperor went the distinguishing significance of the Empire; but there was

one triumph he could not achieve, one failure which invalidated every success; he could not make permanent a power which had been snatched from a chaos of accident, nor convert into a system and an institution the barren supremacy of a name. The "saviour of society" fell, and society went its way to the final consolidation of the Republic he had intervened to destroy.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PARIS COMMUNE OF 1871

[The history of the Commune has yet to be written, though there are innumerable accounts of it: the titles of those published in French or German up to 1885 will be found in a "Bibliographie de la Commune," by ALBERT SCHULTZ (Paris: H. Le Soudier, 1886). In the midst of the chaos of conflicting statements, I have endeavoured to keep my balance by constant reference to the decrees and proclamations of the Commune and the official reports of their meetings: these will be found reproduced from the *Journal Officiel* under the following titles:

"Les Conciliabules de l'Hôtel de Ville" (J. d'Arsac); "Les 31 Séances Officielles de la Commun"; "Actes et Proclamations du Comité Centrale" (A. Fougerousse); "Bulletin des Lois, Arrêtés, Decrets et Proclamations de la Commune de Paris."]

CHAPTER VIII

THE PARIS COMMUNE OF 1871

§ 1. The Proclamation of the Republic, and the Government of National Defence.

The news of the battle of Sedan reached Paris on September 3. At the meeting of the Assembly on the 4th it was proposed to establish a "Government of National Defence," and a committee was appointed to report upon this, and upon a counter-proposition by Palikao to vest the Government in the Council of the existing Ministers. But it was not to the Assembly that the solution was left; the Paris mob intervened: the Assembly was invaded by "a motley crowd in blouses and coarse woollen shirts, or in the uniform of the National Guard or the Guard Mobile. They wore caps and képis of all colours and shapes, and carried muskets with their muzzles ornamented with sprigs of green leaves. The tumult became indescribable, and some of the invaders seized on the pens and paper of the Deputies and commenced writing letters, while different persons were going up to the President's chair and ringing his bell continually." The

President endeavoured in vain to restore order; at last he covered himself, to announce the suspension of the sitting; in the midst of increasing confusion Jules Favre pronounced *la déchéance*, and proceeded with Gambetta and other Deputies of the Left to the Hôtel de Ville; there, in presence of the people, Gambetta proclaimed the Republic, and a provisional "Government of National Defence" was established under the presidency of General Trochu; its members were Jules Favre, Gambetta, Jules Simon, Picard, Jules Ferry, Emmanuel Arago, Pelletier, Garnier-Pagés, Crémieux, Glais-Bizoin, and Rochefort. For the third time within less than half a century a small section of the population of Paris had overthrown the Government of France; for the third time, within less than twenty-five years, the Representative Assembly had been invaded and dissolved by a mob; for the third time within less than a century the Republic had been proclaimed.

§ 2. The Opposition of the Social Democrats.

But the Republic thus established could not, for the moment, be legally organised by an elected Constituent Assembly; the Prussians were marching on Paris, and the first duty of the Government was to prepare to resist them: on September 6, was issued the famous circular to Europe, "we will not yield either an inch of our territory or a stone of our fortresses;" six months later were ceded Alsace and

Lorraine: in the interim, from September 16 to January 28, occurred the siege of Paris.

This siege it fell to the Government of National Defence to sustain; and not only had they to defend the city against the enemy from without, they had also to defend themselves against the enemy from within: for the proclamation of the Republic had unchained insurrection, and the Social Democrats at once asserted themselves against the Moderates, for whose government they had nothing but contempt: —"to make France into a good little Republic, prudent and well-behaved, directed by good bourgeois, introducing generously and by degrees little ameliorations into the lot of the working men, while making them understand that it is impossible to give them everything at once and that Paris was not built in a day; such is the ideal of MM. Jules Favre, Gambetta, Jules Simon, and others." Such is the criticism of the "bourgeois Republic," offered by a prominent Socialist of the time: he regards it as merely a change in the dress instead of in the structure of society, altering the form of the Government and leaving the relations of classes untouched; and even as a form of government it was unsatisfactory; under the pretence of liberty it established a tyranny; Paris, Lyons, all the brain and all the heart of France, were clogged and fettered by the votes of the reactionary provinces; instead of leading they had to follow, instead of dominating they were controlled; as it had been in 1848, so it would be in 1870; the

country would swamp the towns, and reason and sentiment succumb to the dead weight of material interests: for it was only in the great cities that the Republic was understood, and there only by the party that was in permanent insurrection against it, the party that accepted "liberty" only as a temporary weapon of attack, and were ready at any moment to abolish it in the interest of "equality."

§ 3. The Idea of the "Commune."

Their Socialist creed the Democrats had inherited from 1848, and had emphasised, in the interval, under the teaching of Marx and the "International;" but their political attitude had been modified by their experience, under the Second Republic, of the strength of Conservatism in the provinces: it is now, for the first time, that the cry of the Commune is raised; and by the Commune is meant the emancipation of the great cities from the control of the country. This emancipation might be attained in two ways: either the country might be divided into so many autonomous "communes," each sending delegates to a federal council representative of their common interests; this is the Communist theory proper, and the one officially adopted by the Commune of Paris: or the Commune of Paris, as in 1793, might establish throughout France the despotism of its own ideas, organising the towns, which were in sympathy with its aims, to dominate the recalcitrant

country; this is the view that was favoured by a section of the revolutionary party at Paris, and derived a certain force from the circumstances of the time: for now once more, as in 1793, the country was threatened by a foreign foe, once more there was a call for the supernormal energies of revolution the measures that had succeeded once, why should they not succeed again? the Government actually in authority was incapable, if it was not treacherous; it proceeded by the antiquated methods of discipline and routine; but what was wanted was the force of the people set free to organise itself, a Committee of Public Safety elected by popular vote, commissioners to the provinces, the *levée en masse*, and if need be, for traitors, the guillotine.

Such were the views with which the Government was confronted almost from the moment of its installation; vague in themselves and but half-understood by the majority of those who adopted them, distorted and caricatured by ignorance and passion, feverishly disseminated by panic, greedily swallowed by despair, reverberated in every club and printed, for approval or contempt, in every journal, they ended by exalting to fury the more inflammable section of the populace.

§ 4. The Party of Revolution During the Siege.

The commencement of the siege provoked instead of rallying the opposition to the Government: following

what had become, since the first Revolution, a natural tendency of Parisians, the people convinced themselves that their misfortunes were due to "treachery;" if the authorities were to do their duty the Prussians would be swept in a moment from the soil of France; there would be a *sortie torrentielle* of the whole population, it would pass, and the enemy be seen no more! "what were the Government doing? talking of 'discipline,' which had lost us Sedan, and inclining to make terms with the foe! never! no cessions, no indemnity, no parleyings even! down with the traitors! new men, and men of the people! the Commune, which saved us in '93, will save us again in '70! if the men are in doubt the women will show them the way to the Hôtel de Ville!—yes, yes, we will be the first to go! (*tonnerre d'applaudissements!*)—Marat had the traitors guillotined even before the idea of treason had germinated in their mind, and that is how our fathers saved the Republic! the Commune is equal rations, the Commune is the satisfaction of every want, the Commune is the *levée en masse*—in fine, the Commune is the Commune!" Such, if Molinari may be trusted, were the characteristic utterances of the clubs; nor were there wanting speeches more definitely socialist in their tendency:—"yes," cried one, apostrophising the absent capitalists, "the workman ought to own the tools with which he works. If you will not make this concession to him, cease to employ him; but no, you won't be such fools! you won't condemn

yourselves to die of starvation; you will give everything you are asked for, or, if you don't, it will be taken from you. For example, the workmen in the factory of Alexis Godillot may take the shops, the machines, the tools; it would be only using their own property, for at the end of a few years they would be able to indemnify the former owner out of the profits."

Words led to action; twice during the siege of Paris the Government was attacked by insurrection; on October 31 a new Provisional Government was actually established, and for some hours had possession of the Hôtel de Ville; on January 22 a second attempt was made, but this time the insurgents were quickly dispersed by the Breton troops; six days later was concluded the armistice.

§ 5. Paris and the National Assembly.

The armistice was granted in order to allow an appeal to the country, as to whether, and on what terms, peace should be made; for this purpose a general election was held on February 8, and almost everywhere candidates were returned who were favourable to the peace; the majority, moreover, were "reactionists" as in 1849, and especially were hostile to Paris and Parisian domination: "Paris," cried one of them, "is always sending us by telegraph revolutions ready made: Paris is always giving us the fever:" she did not belie herself on this occasion; she sent to the Assembly some thirty Radical members

including Louis Blanc, Garibaldi, and several of the future councillors of the Commune.

The difference between Paris and the Assembly was thus pronounced at the outset; it was intensified by the events that followed: the Assembly not only accepted a peace involving the cession of Alsace and Lorraine; it established its seat at Versailles instead of in the capital; it suppressed Republican journals; it appointed an unpopular man to command the National Guards of Paris; last, but not least, it insisted on the punctual payment of rents and all other obligations that had accumulated during the siege. Each of these acts was a new insult and a new grievance to the capital, and the capital had already prepared an organisation of revolt: in February had been formed a "Central Committee" of the National Guard; this Committee represented 215 battalions, that is to say some 200,000 armed men, drawn from the labouring classes and depending largely for their existence on their pay; it charged itself not only with the interests of the National Guard, and especially with their claim to elect their own officers, but also with the defence of the Republic and the communal privileges of Paris: but the Assembly was, or was suspected to be, Monarchical; it had imposed upon the Guards an unpopular chief; and it was not to be conceived that it would confer upon the capital an autonomy as complete as was demanded or desired: a rupture was therefore inevitable; only the occasion was wanting, and this was not not long in presenting itself.

§ 6. The Revolution of March 18th.

The National Guard had insisted at the time of the capitulation on retaining their arms, and this privilege had been formally secured to them: at the end of February they had transferred their cannon to the heights of Montmartre, on the pretext of removing them from the vicinity of the Prussians when they entered the city on March 1: but the Government knew that there was danger of insurrection, and that they could not leave their enemies in command of the strongest place in the city; accordingly on March 18 they made an attempt to seize the guns; it failed; the population turned out, the Guards assembled, and the regular troops refused to fire; the insurrection spread rapidly, and the Executive, instead of resisting, retired with all its staff to Versailles.

Thus, without a struggle, the city was left to the Central Committee, who constituted themselves a Provisional Government: on the 19th they published a manifesto, explaining their grievances against the Assembly and their intention to proceed at once to the election of a communal council: "my master," they said to the people, "you have made yourself free; do your will. Obscure but a year ago, we are about to re-enter your ranks, and show to all who govern that it is possible to descend, with head erect, the steps of your Hôtel de Ville, with the certainty of meeting below the grasp of your loyal and robust hand."

§ 7. The Elections to the Commune.

They were as good as their word; after the failure of negotiations with the Assembly, undertaken at the instance of the Deputies and Mayors of Paris, they proceeded to the communal elections on the 26th of March; in their address to the electors they besought them to mistrust ambitious men, parvenus, and chatterers:—"avoid also," they continued, "those whom fortune has too highly favoured, for too rarely is he who possesses fortune disposed to regard the labourer as a brother. Finally, seek for men of sincere convictions, men of the people, resolute, active, upright and of recognised honesty. Vote by preference for those who do not solicit your votes; true merit is modest, and it is for the electors to know their men, not for the latter to offer themselves."

There were ninety councillors to elect and some 200,000 citizens voted; among those returned were twenty-four labourers and twelve professional men; the rest belonged to the lower middle class; many were Socialists, and some were prominent members of the "International:"—"to-day," cried the Comité Central, "it has been given to us to witness the grandest popular spectacle which has ever been presented to our eyes, which has ever moved our souls: Paris has hailed and acclaimed her revolution; Paris has opened the book of history at a blank page and inscribed therein her mighty name."

§ 8. The Two Theories of the Commune.

Under such auspices, on the morrow of a disastrous siege, the guns of the Prussians impending on the east, the Versaillese and vengeance on the west, was the Commune of Paris inaugurated; what, now, did it mean? what was its purpose and ideal? The answer has been already indicated; the Revolution of March 18 was a protest not only against the Government of National Defence, and the Assembly actually sitting "which, after betraying France and delivering Paris to the foe, is pursuing, with a blind and cruel obstinacy, the ruin of the capital," but against the whole system of centralisation "despotic, unintelligent, arbitrary, and onerous;" by that system not only was local administration controlled and hampered by the central authority, but the political and social progress of Paris and the other great cities was thwarted by a reactionary government imposed upon them by the provinces:—"Paris," says Arnauld, in his history of the Commune, "is accused of governing France; but as a matter of fact she has always been a serf of the serfs of France;" she makes the revolutions—true, but it is the country that takes them over and perverts them; witness the reactionary Assembly of 1848, and those of the Monarchy and the Second Empire; the Government controls the country, and the country controls the towns; the abuse is flagrant and there is only one remedy—to reduce to a minimum the functions of the central authority, and

allow to local bodies the fullest possible powers not only over their administration, in the narrower sense, but over the whole organisation and development of their society; that is to say, to convert France into a federation of autonomous communes.

Supposing this system to be adopted, what would be the powers of the individual communes? The question is answered as follows by the manifesto of the Commune of Paris published on April 19:— "the inherent rights of the Commune," they say, are as follows:—

"The vote of the communal budget, receipts and expenses; the determination and assessment of taxes; the direction of local business; the organisation of its own magistracy, internal police, and education; the administration of the property belonging to the Commune.

"The choice by election or competition, with responsibility, and the permanent right of control and dismissal, of the communal magistrates and officials of every rank.

"The absolute guarantee of individual liberty, of liberty of conscience and liberty of work.

"The permanent intervention of the citizens in communal affairs by the free manifestation of their ideas and the free defence of their interests: guarantees given to these manifestations by the Commune, whose function alone it is to supervise and guarantee the free and just exercise of the right of meeting and of publicity.

"The organisation of urban defence and of the National Guard, which elects its officers and has the sole charge of the maintenance of order in the city."

Thus possessed of full powers, the Commune would clearly be able to undertake its own social evolution; and this intention the manifesto specially claims for Paris: "by right of her autonomy, and profiting by her liberty of action, Paris reserves it to herself to operate, according to her own ideas, those administrative and economic reforms that are demanded by her population; to create institutions suitable to develop and propagate instruction, production, exchange and credit; and to 'universalise' authority and property according to the necessities of the moment, the wishes of those who are interested, and the data furnished by experience."

Here, in definite terms, is the declaration of Socialism, the end and the real explanation of the movement: the communal theory, in fact, was conceived entirely in the interest of Paris, of Lyons, and possibly of one or two other large cities: to the greater part of France it clearly could not apply; the peasants and the inhabitants of the smaller towns and villages are so notoriously incompetent to manage even their ordinary local business that the Republic has not yet thought fit to emancipate them from the strict supervision of the prefects; to give to them suddenly the control of their finance, police, education and general social development would have been a patent absurdity; the only possible issue of an attempt to

include them in the communal organisation would have been their subordination to the great cities instead of to the Central Government: this, in fact, was the solution recognised by a certain section of the Communards in Paris, though it was not the one officially adopted by the Council; it is thus definitely stated by Lissagaray, who was himself concerned in the movement: "weak, unorganised, bound by a thousand trammels, the people of the country can only be saved by the towns, and the people of the towns by Paris . . . . when the declaration said, 'Unity such as has been imposed upon us until to-day by the Empire, the Monarchy, and Parliamentarism is only despotic unintelligent centralisation' it laid bare the cancer that devours France; but when it added, 'Political unity, as understood by Paris, is the voluntary association of all local initiative,' it showed that it knew nothing whatever of the provinces." The same view is taken in a manifesto of the "Revolutionary Commune" published in 1874 and signed by several members and employés of the Communal Council of 1871; among the various heresies there condemned is included that which sees in the Revolution of March 18 "instead of the revolutionary effort of the people of Paris to conquer the whole country to the communal republic, nothing but a rising to claim municipal franchises." It is plain, then, that the domination of France by Paris was the object at least of a section of the revolutionists, and that the communal theory was involved from the

beginning in a contradiction; in order to deliver Paris and the other "progressive" cities from the control of the retrograde provinces it had announced the principle of local autonomy; but this principle, *ex hypothesi*, the provinces were too retrograde to be able to adopt; it followed that if they were to be brought into the movement they must submit to the domination of Paris; that is to say, the communal principle in order to be established must first be destroyed: once more the Jacobin appears in the disguise of liberty; local autonomy is to be imposed by a central despotism, and a free federation inaugurated by force from the capital.

§ 9. The Government of the Commune.

As it fell out, however, there was practically little question of the provinces: Paris was isolated; her first concern was to organise her own government, and to defend herself, as best she could, against Versailles. For the conduct of affairs the Communal Council divided itself into ten "commissions," of finance, war, public safety, external relations, education, justice, labour and exchange, provisions, the public service, and the general executive. Of these the most efficient appears to have been that of finance; by advances from the bank and by the revenues of the post, the telegraph, the octrois, &c., means were found to provide for the current expenditure. The other commissions were admittedly inefficient, and especially

the one which was most important for the moment, that of war :—"as to a general plan," says Lissagaray, "there never was one: the men were abandoned to themselves, being neither cared for nor controlled;" "at the Ministry," says Gastyne, "no one is at his place. They pass their time in running after one another. The most insignificant lieutenant will take orders from nobody, and wants to give them to everybody. They smoke, chat and chaff. They dispute with the contractors. They buy irresponsibly right and left because the dealers give commissions or have private relations with the officials;" "in the army of Versailles," said a member of the Commune, "they don't get drunk: in ours they are never sober;" "the administration of war," said another, "is the organisation of disorganisation;" "I feel myself," said Rossel, on resigning his command, "incapable of any longer bearing the responsibility of a command where every one deliberates and no one obeys. The central committee of artillery has deliberated and prescribed nothing. The Commune has deliberated and resolved upon nothing. The Central Committee deliberates and has not yet known how to act. . . . . My predecessor committed the fault of struggling against this absurd situation. I retire, and have the honour to ask you for a cell at Mazas."

§ 10. The Committee of Public Safety.

The same incompetence, leading to the same result of anarchy, was displayed by the Executive Commission:—"in less than a fortnight," said Grousset, "conflicts of every kind had arisen; the Executive Commission gave orders which were not executed; each particular commission, thinking itself sovereign in its turn, gave orders too, so that the Executive Commission could have no real responsibility." On April 20 the Executive Commission was replaced by a committee, composed of a delegate from each of the nine other commissions; still efficiency could not be secured, and at the end of the month it was proposed to establish a Committee of Public Safety. This proposition was prompted by the traditions of 1793, and brought into overt antagonism the two conflicting tendencies of the Commune: there were some of its members who were ready to save the movement by a despotism, to secure at every cost a strong administration, and impose the Commune, if need be by terror, upon Paris and the provinces: "we must have a committee," said Miot, "which will give a new impulse to the defence, and have the courage, if necessary, to make the heads of traitors fall"; "hoping," said Rigault, "that the Committee of Public Safety will be in 1871 what it is generally, but wrongly, believed to have been in 1793, I vote for the motion:" on the other hand there was a strong minority which opposed the proposal, on the

ground that it was tantamount to an abdication on the part of the Communal Council; they published a protest on May 15 conceived in the following terms: "the Commune has abdicated its power into the hands of a dictatorship, to which it has given the name of a Committee of Public Safety. The majority has declared itself irresponsible by its vote. The minority, on the contrary, affirms that the Commune owes it to the revolutionary movement to accept all responsibilities. As to ourselves we claim the right of being alone answerable for our acts without screening ourselves behind a superior dictatorship. We withdraw to our arrondissements!" The appointment of the Committee was carried by forty-five votes to twenty-three; many of those who voted for it regarded it as merely another "Executive Commission," subordinate to, and at any moment subject to dismissal by, the Commune; and so, in effect it proved; it was neither more terrible nor more efficient than the body to which it succeeded; it came into existence on the 1st of May, and on the 9th the complaint was already advanced that "your Committee of Public Safety has not answered our expectations; it has been an obstacle, instead of a stimulus;" on the 10th a new committee was appointed, with similar results; all that the innovation achieved was to bring into clear relief the fact that there existed in the Commune a Jacobin element ready to recur to the traditions of 1793, and to make Paris the mistress of France by the guillotine or its modern equivalent.

§ 11. The Commune and the Central Committee

The protest of the minority against the Committee of Public Safety was not the only sign of dissension within the ranks of the Communards. The "Central Committee" of the National Guards, which had made the insurrection, had formally resigned their authority after the elections had been held; but they continued to exist as an organised body, representative of the armed force of the city, and to watch, with a critical eye, the proceedings of the Council. Their verdict was far from favourable: Vaillant, himself a member of the Commune, described it to itself in one of its sessions, as "a little chattering Parliament, breaking, to-morrow, as its fancy may dictate, what it constructed to-day, and frustrating all the decisions of the Executive Commission;" and the Central Committee, if Gastyne may be trusted, was even less measured in its condemnation: "of what is the Commune composed? what is this band of 'pierrots' that the people has unearthed from no one knows where?" who are these 'pulcinellos' that the Commune has chosen for generals?" incompetent, blind and anarchic the Council was ruining the movement which the "Central Committee" had inaugurated: yet it was the Committee who represented the troops, and really controlled the forces of the Commune; it is true that they had definitely, and

even with something of grandiloquence, resigned all claim to authority, but none the less they could not endure to play a secondary *rôle;* they discussed and insulted the Council even in the presence of its members; again and again they discussed the advisability of expelling it by force; but it was not till May 23 that they came to a definite conclusion, and then the Versaillese were in the city, and the time for fruitful action was past.

§ 12. The Commune and Socialism.

Such was the general character of the Government of the Commune; but there is one of its "Commissions," that of Labour and Exchange, which requires a special notice, because to it was entrusted the attempt to inaugurate practical Socialism. The Socialist principle, as we have seen, had been formally adopted from the outset by the Commune; and it was asserted, with yet greater emphasis, in a proclamation of the "Central Committee," issued on April 5:— "working men," they cried, "do not deceive yourselves: this is the great struggle; it is parasitism and labour, exploitation and production, that are at issue. If you are tired of vegetating in ignorance and stagnating in misery; if you wish your children to be men enjoying the fruits of their labour, and not a kind of animals trained for the workshop or the battle, fertilising with their sweat the fortune of an exploiter or shedding their blood for a despot; if you

do not wish your daughters, whom you cannot bring up and watch as you would like, to be instruments of pleasure in the arms of the aristocracy of wealth; if you do not wish drunkenness and misery to drive men into the police courts and women to prostitution; if, in short, you wish for the reign of justice, then, working men, be intelligent, arise, and let your strong hands hurl the filthy reaction under your feet." "The Central Committee," the proclamation concludes, "is convinced that the heroic population of Paris is about to immortalise itself and regenerate the world."

This prophecy was not fulfilled: it is one thing to announce a principle, and another to carry it into effect; and it was clearly impossible for a Government existing on sufferance, and obliged to devote the best part of its energies to repelling a hostile army, to introduce in a single city, and within the space of two months, a radical reform in the economic organisation in which the whole of the western world was involved. Certain measures, however, the Commune did adopt, which tended, more or less clearly, in the direction of Socialism. It has already been noted that one of the causes of the insurrection of March 18 was the decree of the National Assembly enforcing the payment of rents and of other obligations that the distress occasioned by the siege had rendered it difficult or impossible to meet; this, then, was one of the questions with which the Commune had to deal, and they solved it in the interest of the debtors;

they remitted all rents for the nine months from October 1870 to June 1871, permitted the cancelling of any lease within the next half year, and suspended for six months any notice to quit, at the desire of the lodger: in the case of bills that were overdue they showed more respect for the interests of the creditor; "the rights of the creditor," said one of the members, "are as sacred as those of the debtor," and a project which would have made such values irrecoverable during the next three years was set aside as unjust; finally, it was decided that all debts due at the moment of the decree should be payable in twelve instalments at intervals of three months, and without bearing interest.

Both these measures were an infringement of the "rights of property," but they were adopted in the interest of private individuals, not in that of the State, to meet an emergency created by the exceptional circumstances of the siege: more directly indicative of the Socialist tendency of the Commune is a decree which they passed prohibiting night-work for bakers; "their labour," cried Avrial, "is an immoral labour; one cannot make two classes in society; one cannot make workmen who are men like ourselves work by night and never see the day;" under the influence of this feeling the decree in question was issued, but it does not appear to have been carried into effect; the master bakers protested, with reason, that they could not alter their system at a moment's notice; they simply ignored and neglected

the order, which "had to be passed again and has been since withdrawn."

A more deliberate intention to establish State Socialism was indicated by the appointment of a "Commission of Inquiry," to draw up a list and inventory of all deserted factories with a view to their exploitation in the interest of the labourers; but here, too, nothing was actually achieved: the Socialists of the Commune, when face to face with the facts, proved themselves unable to deal with them in the spirit of their own theory; Socialism inaugurated by insurrection proved as ineffectual in 1871 as it had been in 1848, and the "regeneration of the world," and the "immortality of the heroic population of Paris," was once more indefinitely postponed.

§ 13. The Commune and the Church.

The position theoretically assumed by the Commune was that of local autonomy; there was a tendency, however, as we have noticed, to substitute for this, in practice, the government of France by Paris, and we find, accordingly, certain acts of the Commune which affect, or would have affected if they could have been applied, not Paris alone but the whole kingdom of France. For example, at the beginning of April the following decree was passed:—

"The Commune of Paris

Considering that the first principle of the French Republic is liberty;

Considering that liberty of conscience is the first of liberties;

Considering that the budget of the cults is contrary to principle, since it forces the citizens to contribute to the support of a faith which is not their own;

Considering, in fact, that the clergy has been the accomplice of the crimes of the Monarchy against liberty;

Decrees:—

1. The Church is separated from the State.

2. The budget of cults is suppressed.

3. The property held in mainmort by religious congregations, whether personal or landed, is declared to be national property.

4. An inquiry will be immediately held upon this property, to determine its nature and to put it at the disposal of the nation."

Thus the Communal Council of Paris, officially professing to represent nothing but Parisian interests, passes a decree affecting the clergy in the whole of France, a decree of instant confiscation without indemnity; and this decree is passed in the name of liberty. A similar usurpation of national powers is involved in the summary order that declared the conscription and the standing army to be abolished.

§ 14. The Hostages.

There is one other act of the Commune which must be noticed here; it is that which decreed the

arrest of "all persons suspected of complicity with the Government of Versailles;" such persons were to be brought at once before a jury to determine whether or no they should be detained; those detained were to be regarded as hostages, and "every execution of a prisoner of war or of a partisan of the Government of the Commune of Paris" was to be "immediately followed by the execution of a triple number of hostages." This decree was passed as a measure of reprisal; the war waged by the Versaillese was one of exceptional ferocity; the circumstances of the insurrection, following immediately upon the siege and while the country was still in occupation of the enemy, the general impression that the Communards were a band of robbers and assassins, and in particular, the murder on the 18th of March, by an irresponsible mob, of Generals Lecomte and Thomas, had rendered the assailants implacable and insatiable in their revenge; they had taken the initiative of shooting prisoners, and it was in retaliation for this that the Commune passed their decree: under it were arrested some three hundred persons, including the Archbishop of Paris and a considerable number of priests, but no executions took place until the Versaillese were actually in the city; then, in the midst of the madness of slaughter. conflagration and defeat, sixty-three persons, including the Archbishop, were shot in cold blood.

§ 15. The Capture and Destruction of Paris.

The war, which began on April 2, lasted till the end of May; during this time Paris exhibited an extraordinary spectacle:—"one could not help being struck," says Count d'Orsi, "with the contrast presented in the city itself, destruction and death raging in some of its quarters, intersected by barricades, while cannonade was levelling to the ground its beautiful environs; and at the same time its fashionable boulevards crowded with elegant folks, loitering and smiling as if nothing was going on. The theatres were open. Light-hearted people were heard saying, "Well! they fight there, let us enjoy ourselves here!" The cafés were ordered to be shut at midnight: useless precaution—you could see the lights through the interstices of the shutters, and men and women chatting, smoking, playing, and drinking, while the cannon was roaring in the distance, the mitrailleuses rattling incessantly, and the musketry cracking without intermittence. That was not all: after spending part of the night in these dens of infamy, it was considered a good joke to spend the rest in hiring a cab, and the weather being fine, to drive to the Arc de Triomphe to see how the fight was progressing."

It was on the 21st of May that the Versaillese entered Paris; there followed eight days of street fighting lit by conflagration: how far the Commune as a corporate body was officially responsible for the

burning of the city, it is not easy to establish: it is certain that on May 17 a notice was placarded ordering "all who have stores of petroleum and other mineral oil to declare them at once;" it appears probable that orders were given by the Committee of Public Safety for the destruction of the Tuileries, the Palais Royal, and other public buildings; and in a manifesto entitled "The Revolutionary Commune," and signed by some of the members and employés of the Communal Council of Paris, the responsibility for incendiarism is frankly and triumphantly assumed: but whatever the origin of the conflagrations, whether due to the shells of the Versaillese, to individual and irresponsible action, or to deliberate organisation by the authorities, in those eight days of May an irreparable ruin was accomplished: "Paris," writes Lissagaray, "continued to burn furiously. The Porte St. Martin, the St. Eustache Church, the Rue Royale, the Rue de Rivoli, the Tuileries, the Palais Royal, the Hôtel de Ville, the Théâtre Lyrique, the left bank from the Légion d'Honneur up to the Palais de Justice and the Préfecture de Police stood out bright red in the darkness of night. The caprices of the fire displayed a blazing architecture of arches, cupolas, spectral edifices. Great volumes of smoke, clouds of sparks flying into the air, attested formidable explosions; every moment stars lit up and died out again in the horizon. These were the cannon of the Fort de Bicêtre, of the Père Lachaise, and the Buttes

Chaumont, which fired on the invaded quarters. The Versaillese batteries answered from the Panthéon, the Trocadéro, and Montmartre. Now the reports followed each other at regular intervals; now there was a continuous thunder along the whole line. The whole town was enveloped in a cloud of flame and smoke." Thus girt and canopied with fire the battle continued without remission; the Communards were mad with desperation, the Versaillese with revenge; "we had been told," said one of their sergeants, "that the fédérés were assassinating all Paris, that they were stealing and pillaging with impunity and wanted to destroy everything;" "those brigands of Paris," it was asserted, "will try to poison you by offering you drink, and if they make you prisoners they will soak you in petroleum and burn you." Never had conflict so savage been waged, even in the streets of Paris: nor was the matter ended by the capture of the city; proscription followed, executions, transportation, imprisonment: once more a section of Frenchmen was put under the ban of France, once more was created and handed down a legacy of hatred and revolt.

§ 16. Conclusion.

The judgment of history on the Commune emerges from the record of the facts. A minority in Paris had conceived an ideal which very possibly may be that to which modern societies are tending—the ideal

of small communities possessed of a considerable measure of local autonomy, managing their own finance, police and public services, and responsible for their own social and economic organisation, but federated together and sending representatives to a central council or assembly, for the transaction of those affairs which affect the common interests of them all: the conditions of attaining, or even beginning to approximate to this ideal, appear to be indicated by the very nature of the problem; they would include, for example, the following—a certain common level of intelligence and capacity throughout the various districts in the country to which the system was to be applied; the consent and hearty co-operation of them all, expressed through their only common organ, the National Assembly; and peace and leisure to discuss, apply and gradually modify and correct such tentative and experimental measures as, it might be hoped, would lead, in the end, to a clear and practical definition of the powers of the separate local bodies, and of their relations to one another: all of these conditions were wanting in France: between the great cities and the country there was not merely a distinction, but an antagonism so great that they were not even agreed as to whether they would be governed by a Monarchy or a Republic; free federation of the kind desired, between elements so mutually incompatible, was recognised, even among the Communards themselves as an absurdity, and must have issued, if it could ever have been seriously attempted, either in anarchy or in the despotism of

Paris: it was impossible, under the circumstances, that the nation, as a whole, should consent to the application of the communal principle, and, in fact, it was the known hostility of the Assembly to the claims and desires of Paris that was the primary occasion of her insurrection: so far, moreover, was the country from enjoying the peace and leisure required for such a transition that it was actually in the occupation of a foreign enemy, on the morrow of a crushing defeat: and it was under these circumstances, at a moment when every energy of the nation was called upon to co-operate for the maintenance of its bare existence, that a section of the citizens of Paris, transported by enthusiasm, by suspicion, or by pique, determined to attempt by insurrection the work of wisdom and time: they formed themselves into a government composed in the main of well-intentioned men, of no exceptional capacity and no extended experience; they passed decrees which were not obeyed, and organised services which did not work; they inaugurated civil war, and, provoked by the violence for which they were themselves responsible, made themselves, individually or collectively, accomplices of incendiarism and murder; and they achieved, as the final result of all their action, the slaughter and proscription of thousands of citizens, the destruction of the most precious monuments of Paris, and the arrest or retrogression, for an indefinite time, of the movement they had risked civilisation itself to advance.

CHAPTER IX

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THE Republic proclaimed by revolution in Paris in September 1870 was formally constituted by the National Assembly in February 1875; so strong however was the opposition of the Monarchists that the final vote which accepted the Constitution was passed by a majority of only one. It might naturally be expected that a Government established on so slight a basis would have proved as ephemeral as that of 1848; but the fact has proved the contrary; every year appears to confirm the stability of the Republic, and it may perhaps be safely assumed that the acceptance of the principle it represents is at length assured. That principle is the "sovereignty of the people," proclaimed in theory in 1789, suppressed in fact by the Reign of Terror, eluded by the Empire, denied by the Monarchy, asserted again by the second Republic, eluded again by the second Empire, ostensibly accepted and established by the third Republic, but opposed from the beginning and still opposed, though more and more feebly, by the

opposite and incompatible principle of the divine right of kings.

The victory, in this contest, of the "sovereignty of the people," implies a revolution not merely in the form of government, but in the whole conception of society. According to the theory of the Middle Ages, the theory which was accepted in France up to 1789, which returned in 1814, and which is still maintained by the more convinced and ardent Legitimists, the foundation of society was the Church, and its necessary and ultimate form the Monarchy: Church and State were the two sides of one divine fact: they depended on the same axioms and fell by the same criticism: if there had been a special revelation from God, if that revelation had been entrusted to a special body, if the tradition of that body was continuous, its judgments infallible, its decrees imperative, then from it must derive not only the spiritual, but the political and economic order of the world: of that order the complete expression would have been the supremacy of the single Emperor under the single Pope; its more imperfect manifestation was the authority of absolute kings, deriving from the consecration of the Church the spiritual basis and the theoretic justification of their power: thus the political organisation of society depended on the Catholic Church; to attack the one was to attack the other; and the necessary prelude to the declaration of rights was the declaration of the supremacy of reason.

That declaration was made by the philosophy of the

eighteenth century, and the Revolution of 1789 was an attempt to put it into practice. Henceforth the basis of society was to be rational, not supernatural; but the question immediately arose, what did "reason" involve and how was it to be applied? The first answer of the Revolution was to divorce reason from experience, to formulate certain abstract doctrines, applicable to certain abstract beings, and from them to deduce the system into which the new society was to fall: the doctrines were called "rights" and the abstract beings "citizens:" equality was a right, liberty was a right, sovereignty of the people was a right, and these rights were axioms of the reason, which had only to be stated to ensure their acceptance. It was found, however, on experiment, that the citizens did not exist and the rights could not be established; and so disastrous in practice was this first attempt of the Revolution to construct a new society that the result would have discredited a theory far more plausible and more profound. It is not surprising, therefore, that a catholic and monarchic reaction should have ensued; anything was better than nothing, even an absurdity; the axioms of Maistre and Bonald, it is true, were unprovable and even ridiculous, but they were supported by the thought and the practice of centuries, while those of their opponents, equally untenable in themselves, had no better testimonial to advance in their favour than the record of a catastrophe behind them and the peril of an experiment in front. The strength of the

Royalist position was thus not only in its material force; it depended also on the continuity of its institutions and ideas with the past, and on the elaborate consistency of its theory with itself: such a position it was idle for the Liberals to continue to attack with phrases, and accordingly the more thoughtful and able among them adopted a different attitude; they neither asserted nor accepted the sovereignty of the people, but fell back upon the fact of the established constitution; to interpret this in a liberal spirit, avoiding the question of rights but insisting on that of powers, neither denying the prerogative of the Crown nor claiming that of the nation, but recalling the voluntary concessions of the one and the privileges legally accorded to the other, became under the Restoration the policy of the Constitutional Left: that policy triumphed at the Revolution of 1830; henceforth it is the Legitimists, with their theory of the absolute monarchy, that are in opposition, and the compromise of the parliamentary liberals has become the accepted basis of government; neither the king nor the people has an abstract and absolute right, but each has its definite powers, guaranteed by the Charter; the basis of government is empirical; its main lines have been determined in accordance with the lessons of experience, and within them sufficient latitude is left for adaptation to new conditions. Such was the system of the Monarchy of July; but it was repugnant to the national temper: it was a compromise, and therefore illogical: the divine right

of kings was clear, the sovereignty of the people was clear; but what was the constitutional monarchy? a mere isolated fact, insulting to the intellect! Accordingly, the Revolution, which had twice overthrown the absolute Monarchy, proceeded to overthrow, in its turn, the Monarchy of July: once more the Republic arose on the basis of the sovereignty of the people, and once more the sovereignty of the people collapsed under its weight: the second Republic, like the first, issued in the Empire, and it was from the ruins of the Empire that the present Government emerged.

If, now, we proceed to review the total result of this remarkable history, we shall observe that the Monarchy, to all appearance, has finally succumbed to Democracy; whether in its absolute or its constitutional form it has become, by the progress of thought and of events, untenable in theory, and unattainable in fact: another Empire may be possible, but hardly another Bourbon restoration: the Church is accepting the Republic, and the support of the Church is the condition of a Monarchy by right divine; while a Monarchy by compromise and arrangement, though it may emerge in the transition from absolutism to democracy, will hardly be reimposed when the time of transition is passed: unless, therefore, the Republic should succumb to some more successful Boulanger, it may be supposed that the "sovereignty of the people" is finally accepted as the basis of government in France.

But it is accepted under definite forms and with definite limitations; it is exercised through two Chambers, of which the second, the Senate, is chosen not directly by universal suffrage, but by a special body of privileged electors;* and through a President appointed not directly by universal suffrage, but by the Senate and the Chamber united in a "Congress"; neither the Legislative Councils nor the President are revocable by their electors, but have their definite term of office, during which they are free to follow their own judgment; and the Government, under the Republic as under every previous *régime*, is able, through its control of the administrative system, to exercise considerable pressure upon the voters. If all this be considered it will be seen that a Republic like that of France is hardly more "democratic" than a Monarchy like that of England: neither is it more "free"; on the contrary, it is less so; it is only recently that the French have acquired what appear to us the most elementary liberties, those of the press and of public meeting; that of association they do not yet possess, and that of local self-government only in a very modified degree. As far, then, as liberty is concerned, such distinction as there may be between France and

* This electoral body consists (1) of the Deputies, Councillors-General, and District-Councillors (Conseillers d'Arrondissement) of the Departments; (2) of delegates chosen by the Municipal Councils. (Lebon and Pelet, "France as It Is," p. 72.)

England does not lie to the credit of the former; it would be possible to pass a severer sentence; but we may content ourselves with quoting from M. Renan a judgment that might seem ungracious in the mouth of a foreigner:—"France," he said in 1870, "presents the strange spectacle of a country which is trying slowly to make up its arrears on the nations which it had regarded as retrograde, which is putting itself to school with the peoples which it had claimed to instruct, and which is making efforts to accomplish by imitation the work in which it had affected a lofty originality."

The title "Republic," in fact, does not signify in France any unusual measure of liberty, nor any extreme application of democratic institutions; what it does signify, is a break in continuity: it is the method, rather than the result, that distinguishes France from England, and in politics the method is at least as important as the end; for while it is often said, and still more often believed, that the end justifies the means, it is much truer, and much more frequently illustrated, that the means destroy the end. The whole history of modern France is a comment on this text; it was her fate, rather than her choice, to adopt the method of force; and what has been the result? after nine changes in the form of government, seven violent revolutions, and two occupations by a foreign enemy, rent into factions from within, shorn of her provinces from without, having slaughtered, proscribed, and alienated section after section

of her population, she has attained at length, under the name of the Republic, a measure of liberty confessedly neither so full nor so secure as that which has been evolved, almost without shock, under the English Monarchy. Such is the material achievement of the Revolutionary method; and not less remarkable has been its effect on the political character of the nation: of parties it has made factions, of governments, tyrants, of opponents, conspirators: those constant and happily complementary types, the Radical and the Tory, it has exaggerated into their sinister caricatures, the Jacobin and the Reactionist; each in turn the fury of which the other is the prey, they fly or pursue, alternate, in their shifting dance of death; each a fanatic, one of the future, the other of the past, one of the inadequate idea, the other of the imperfect fact, both universalising their own conception to an absolute and peremptory law, in their passion for the "what" indifferent to the "who" or the "how" or the "when," claiming universal suffrage as a means to the tyranny of a sect, and combining to annihilate their adversaries as a prelude to annihilating one another, confused in proportion to their shallow lucidity and dishonest in proportion to their tense and acrid zeal, seeing in themselves no less than society and in society no more than themselves, now in power and now in opposition, but everywhere and always ominous and disastrous, they have proclaimed themselves, alike by their words, their methods, and their ideal, the

curse of the mother country they claim to represent and the ruin of the civilisation they profess to regenerate or to save: bred, in the beginning, of revolution, in their turn they engender it; against them, throughout the century, the Moderates struggle in vain; the Mirabeaus, Martignacs, Broglies, Guizots, succumb to the Robespierres and the Villèles, and to the Nemesis of these, the two Napoleons; and if at last the Republic of Compromise has prevailed, it was only from the ruins of Sedan that it emerged and from the ashes of the Paris Commune.

Such, up to the present, is the political achievement of the Revolution; but it would be idle to suppose that its work is finished: there is nothing final in the form of the present Republic; the same tendency which created is still in force to destroy it; the ideal of the "sovereignty of the people" confronts the imperfect fact, and observes, in sorrow and in anger, that a Deputy is more than a delegate, and a President more than a clerk: it was one of the discoveries of Rousseau that an elector is the slave of his representative, and the discovery has never been forgotten by Radicals in France; the immediate and direct intervention of the people *en masse* to control or cashier their Government has been their constant theory and their constant claim, and the expulsion of the Girondins in 1793, and the attempt to dissolve the Constituent Assembly in 1848, are merely striking examples of a reasoned and deliberate policy: such a policy could only be realised, if at all, in small

autonomous communities; and it is the Paris Commune of 1871 that has expressed in the completest terms its ultimate tendency and ideal. Whether this ideal can be realised, and realised with profit, depends entirely on the method adopted towards its attainment; a system which demands from the whole population the maximum of intelligence and honesty will hardly be imposed by force, at the dictation of an abstract theory, though it might conceivably arrive, in the natural course of events, by the development of public spirit and business ability: however that may be, the tendency exists; and there is no reason to suppose that, even in a political sense, the Revolution of 1789 has reached its term in the third Republic.

Still less will this be maintained if we take the social point of view, which underlies and more and more determines the whole movement. For though the Revolution of 1789 was primarily political, it was coincident with an economic change involving serious problems of its own, and coming to exercise in the end a direct and predominant effect upon politics. The anarchy of the competitive system of industry led to the theory of Socialism; and Socialism, following the tendency of the time, became in France a revolutionary force: it is so still: for in the "minimum programme" of the French labour party, issued in 1880, we find it definitely announced "that the emancipation of the class of producers is that of all human beings, without distinction of sex or race";

"that it is impossible for the producers to be free until they possess the means of production;" and "that this collective appropriation can only be brought about by the revolutionary action of the class of producers organised as a distinct political party." The "emancipation of the producers," has thus become, since 1848, a part of the revolutionary movement, and until it has been attained no merely political organisation will lay the spirit of revolt. Whether Socialism is the means to this "emancipation" is another question; Socialism, at present, is merely a theory on which we have hardly begun to experiment; how far the experiment will answer, and how far it will be carried, no one, as yet, in spite of the dogmatism of Socialists, is in a position to say; but whatever the means, the "emancipation" itself is part, and the chief part, of the democratic ideal; and thus, whether it be regarded from the political or the social point of view, the Republic in France is a phase and not the conclusion of the revolutionary movement.

For whatever the catastrophes through which it has advanced, and the perils and absurdities in which it is involved, Democracy has an ideal, and one peculiar to itself. Democracy as a form of government derives its interest and vitality from the conception of Democracy as a form of society; and though the latter is by no means an inevitable consequence of the former, yet the former may be fairly regarded as a necessary condition of the latter. The conception, embodied in the writings of Walt Whitman and of Edward

Carpenter, of a society of self-sufficing individuals, united not by conventions and external ties, but by a deliberate appreciation and choice of one another, a society of "equals," because each is himself, and of "freemen," because none is weak—this conception, which, more or less distinctly and passionately grasped, is a real force that shapes and redeems the moving chaos of politics, appears to involve in itself and to justify the ideal of self-government. It must be noted, however, that such a conception is rather an emotional inspiration than a clear and readily applicable principle, and that its positive value as a political motive depends on its close association with practical knowledge and administrative skill. For it is people as they are, not people as they ought to be, with whom the statesman has to deal; and calculations based on the latter are not applicable to the former. It has been the curse of France throughout the century, and it appears to be the danger of every nascent democracy, to confuse the fact with the ideal, the "ought to be" with the "is." Such misinterpretation of data leads as inevitably to disaster in politics as it would in engineering or in mining. If, for example, the "people" be identified with perfected humanity, and the franchise indefinitely extended on that hypothesis, the result will be, not the realisation of a "general" and infallible "will," but the tyranny of the least respectable and scrupulous of the never too respectable and scrupulous electoral jobbers; for,

as a matter of fact, in a complex modern state, the "people" does not exist as a single political entity; it has not got a will, and therefore it cannot express it; classes have a will on matters that concern their own interests, individuals have a will on matters that concern the nation at large, but the "sovereignty of the people," in actual practice, is merely a synonym for the net result, as determined by the inadequate method of counting votes, of the sum of influences brought to bear upon a heterogeneous mass of men, too indifferent or too incompetent to pronounce with any conviction upon the majority of the questions submitted to their votes. If this fact be frankly admitted, it can be met and dealt with like any other difficulty; but if it be obscured or denied, and the assertion constantly made, not that the people may be taught wisdom, and that it is worth while running risks to attain that end, but that they *are* naturally wise by some property inherent in "the mass," though denied to every individual of which it is composed, and if, in accordance with this theory, every barrier be levelled, every restriction removed, every guarantee of the most elementary experience and education thrown aside, then we are simply undoing our own work, and preparing a reaction that will endanger or destroy Democracy, as a result of the attempt to realise it prematurely.

The confusion of Democracy as it is with Democracy as it ought to be, of an imperfect and perilous form of

government with an ideal organisation of society, is similar to that which arises in connection with Socialism. This word, too, is commonly used in at least two senses; in the one, it is a definite economic scheme, the appropriation of the means of production by the State, in the other, it is a vague conception of the social millennium; the two things are perfectly distinct, but they are frequently identified, by a confusion which is exceedingly useful to the economic scheme; for if it is generally supposed, even on grounds so inadequate as a quibble on a name, that the possession of land and capital by the State will make everybody happy and everybody rich, then the whole force of public opinion is secured in the interests of that particular measure. Here again the ideal comes in to obscure the fact; the measure in question may be desirable or not; but it has to be argued on economic grounds, and to be tested by tentative experiment; and it is a mere confusion of the issue to treat it as a moral postulate, which only indifferent or interested persons refuse to accept and apply.

About these two words, Democracy and Socialism, centres at present the chief interest of political thought and action: together, they represent, on the one hand the general political and social ideal, on the other a particular political and social organisation; but the organisation and the ideal are not identical; we hope that the latter may proceed from the former, at the very most, we believe that the former is a

condition of the latter, and in that hope, or that belief, we enter upon a complex and difficult experiment: if in that experiment, so far as it has been carried, the English have hitherto been singularly successful, it is because, with their natural genius for politics, they have avoided the abstract and idealistic method of the French; and if their success is to continue, it will continue on the same condition. The French are ridden by logic and sentiment, and logic and sentiment are the ruin of States: we, up till now, have escaped the disease; but it is one to which a democracy is singularly liable, and of which the germs are already beginning to show themselves among us; when, for example, institutions are attacked not because they are inefficient but because they are anomalous, when principles are pushed to their logical extreme without consideration of circumstances or needs, when, to take a particular case, a considerable body of electors vote for Home Rule in Ireland because they want it in London, an observer who happens not to be attached to any political party cannot avoid a certain feeling of ominous foreboding. For much more important than even the most important of the questions on which parties are divided is the general temper of mind in which such questions are approached: on every point there will always be differences of opinion; but the opinion may be solid or superficial, rational or hysterical; and there is the real hinge on which the greatness of a democratic State will turn. The

tendency of Democracy is to enthusiasm followed by blind reaction; its only corrective is experience; and it is because the history of modern France is a striking piece of democratic experience that I have thought it worth while to lay it clearly before the Democracy of England.

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
London and Edinburgh

Digitized with financial assistance from

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on 28 December, 2018